

# 2011-2016



WOLESI  
JIRGA

## STRATEGIC PLAN

Wolesi Jirga Strategic Plan 2011-2016

# FOREWORD

*Insert picture here of Speaker*

*In the name of God the Merciful, the Compassionate*

Our nation has suffered grievously over the past 30 years. The slow and painful process of national reconstruction is underway with the support of the democracies of the world. I am certain that we will meet the challenges which lie before us and Afghanistan will win for itself the inestimable benefits of peace and prosperity.

A tangible success of our people has been the creation of our parliament, the National Assembly of Afghanistan, and the centre of our increasingly vibrant democracy.

We, who have been given the responsibility and privilege of leading the nation and the Assembly, have a duty and trust to ensure a process of constant improvement and renewal in the operation of its national political institutions. This is of particular importance in the case of the Wolesi Jirga, the House of the People, to which the Constitution of Afghanistan has assigned particular duties and national leadership functions.

It is my great pleasure, therefore, to introduce the Wolesi Jirga's *Strategic Plan: 2011 – 2016*.

The *Plan* represents the aspirations of our House to serve the people of Afghanistan with increasing effectiveness. To that end, the *Plan* explains briefly the constitutional context in which the Wolesi Jirga operates, before setting out our Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles on which the Strategic Goals and roadmap for constant, ambitious improvement in all areas of our operations is based.

I hope that you will find the *Strategic Plan* interesting and instructive. It is a dynamic document which will be regularly revisited and updated where necessary over the present planning period, and is designed to be a permanent feature of the future governance of our House.

Finally, I would be delighted to receive any comments you may have on our *Strategic Plan*, or suggestions for further improvement.

**Abdul Rouf Ibrahim**

**President of the Wolesi Jirga**

## PREFACE

*Insert picture here of Secretary General*

The core roles of and parliament are legislative, oversight and representational. The Wolesi Jirga Strategic Plan 2011-2016, focuses on the issue of creating a National Assembly that seeks to deliver efficiently and effectively in these central functions in the face of the challenge of underdevelopment.

In a fast technologically changing world, the Wolesi Jirga, as the House of the People, needs appropriate capacity in the form of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, structures, financial resources, strategic focus and appropriate tools to enable it to deliver its mandate.

To exercise the legislative, oversight and representative functions for the promotion of principles of good governance which reflect the aspirations, interests and welfare of the Afghan people, this House will enhance its institutional capacity to provide assistance to MPs in their duties and tasks; improve the legislative process and the capacity of the Wolesi Jirga to provide effective oversight of the Executive. It has to strengthen the leadership and representative roles of MPs, and increase the outreach of the Jirga so as to bring the MPs to the people of Afghanistan.

This Strategic Plan for 2011-2016, which builds on the considerable experience the Secretariat has gained over the past 5 years since the inauguration of the National Assembly, is designed to enhance the capacity of the Wolesi Jirga to deliver positive benefits for the people of Afghanistan.

Finally, throughout the development of the Plan, the House was conscious of its central role in the governance of Afghanistan and, in particular, its responsibility to provide significant added value to the legislation of the country and a powerful and constructive oversight of the government. To that end, the Strategy commits the House to develop ways to work constructively with the Executive for the betterment of the lives of the Afghan people.

**Ghulam Hassan Gran**

**Secretary General of the Wolesi Jirga**

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# INTRODUCTION

## ***Background***

Following the Bonn Agreement signed in December 2001 and the convening of the Emergency Loya Jirga, agreement was reached to establish an interim Executive for a period of two years, at the end of which presidential and parliamentary elections were to take place. In January 2004, the Constitutional Loya Jirga adopted a new Constitution for Afghanistan which provided formally for the establishment of a bicameral parliament.

## ***Nature, structure and first election***

The Constitution of Afghanistan describes the National Assembly as ‘the highest legislative organ [which] shall manifest the will of its people as well as represent the entire nation.’ (Article 81). There are two Houses: the Wolesi Jirga (House of the People, or Lower House), and the Meshrano Jirga (House of Elders, or Upper House) (Article 82).

The membership of the Wolesi Jirga is capped at 250 members. The House is directly elected by the people ‘through free, general, secret and direct balloting’ (Article 83). The Meshrano Jirga consists of 102 Members, one third being elected by the Provincial Councils from amongst their Members, another one third by District Councils from among their Members, and one third being appointed by the President of the Republic. There is reservation of seats for women in the Lower House at two Members per province (68 Members). In the Upper House, half the number of Presidential appointees (17 Members) shall be women. This accounts for 24% reservation of seats for women in the National Assembly as a whole.

The legislative term of the Wolesi Jirga is five years. Members of Meshrano Jirga have different terms of office. District Council representatives serve for three years, Provincial Council representatives for four years, and Presidential appointees for five years.

In the general elections of September 2005, the people of Afghanistan returned 249 representatives to the Wolesi Jirga and 102 to the Meshrano Jirga. There are 91 women members.

## ***The Administration***

According to Article 87 of the Constitution, each of the Houses of the National Assembly elects one member as President for the term of the legislature. This provision also provides for the election by the respective Houses of First and Second Deputy Presidents and Secretary and Assistant Secretary for a period of one year. These authorities, taken together, form the Administrative Boards of the Houses.

## ***Powers and functions of the National Assembly***

Article 90 of the Constitution sets out the duties of the National Assembly as follows:

- Ratification, modification or abrogation of laws or legislative decrees
- Approval of social, cultural, economic as well as technological development programmes
- Approval of the State Budget as well as permission to obtain or grant loans
- Creation, modification, and/or abrogation of administrative units
- Ratification of international treaties and agreements, or abrogation of the membership of Afghanistan in them
- Other authorities enshrined in [the] Constitution

The Constitution grants important powers to the Wolesi Jirga of questioning Ministers of the Government of Afghanistan, approving or rejecting appointments of Ministers (Article 91), and endorsing members of the Supreme Court proposed by the President of the Republic (Article 117).

Both Houses hold Sessions concurrently but separately. The National Assembly holds two regular Sessions annually. The duration of both the Sessions is nine months in a year. An Extraordinary Session can be convened by Presidential Order (Article 107). The Sessions are open, but provision is made for closed sessions (Article 105).

Article 88 of the Constitution provides power to the National Assembly to form commissions; and Article 93 for the commissions to question Ministers. There are presently 14 commissions in the Wolesi Jirga, and 11 in the Meshrano Jirga. Much of the detailed work of the Assembly is conducted by these commissions which examine, for example, details of the proposals and performance of various Ministries in the context of legislation, budget approval and execution. The transaction of detailed legislative scrutiny and the oversight of Government business by commissions assist the plenary to focus its sessions on the transaction of business of urgent national importance.

## ***Parliamentary secretariat***

Each House has a Secretariat headed by a Secretary General which is sub-divided into a number of Departments. The broad functions of the Secretariats are to administer the Houses under the direction of the Presidents of the Houses and the Administrative Boards. Specific duties of the Secretariats in respect of Members include:

- Analysis of Bills, Budget, and Development programmes
- Secretariat support to Parliamentary Commissions
- Research support for members
- Administration of the National Assembly Library
- Facilitation of Parliamentary exchanges and participation in international conferences of Parliamentarians
- Administration of the salaries and allowances

The Secretariat of the Wolesi Jirga numbers 300 and the Secretariat of the Meshrano Jirga 219.

## ***Strategic plan***

The Wolesi and Meshrano Jirgas have legislative, oversight and representational roles. The *Strategic Plan: 2011-2016*, the first such Plan which the House has published, focuses on consolidating a parliamentary culture and administrative structure that will enable the efficient and effective delivery of those core functions in the face of the considerable challenges currently facing Afghanistan.

To exercise the legislative, oversight and representative functions for the promotion of principles of good governance which reflect the aspirations, interests and welfare of the people of Afghanistan, the National Assembly of Afghanistan requires to deepen institutional capacity in order to provide excellent assistance to Members in the execution of their functions; to streamline further the legislative process and the capacity of the Houses to provide effective oversight of the Government; to strengthen the leadership and representative roles of Members; and to increase the outreach of the Assembly.

Like parliaments world-wide, the Houses need appropriate capacity in the form of skills, knowledge, attitudes, values, structures, financial resources, strategic focus and appropriate tools to enable them to deliver this outcome and their mandates. The *Strategic Plan: 2011 – 2016*, is designed to create a vibrant and challenging framework for achieving those goals.

Our Strategic Plan contains a vision and mission for the Wolesi Jirga. Our vision encapsulates the type of legislature Afghanistan needs while our mission outlines in greater detail the way in which the Wolesi Jirga will develop over the period of this Strategic Plan. In order to make progress towards achieving our vision and implementing our mission, we have highlighted six strategic goals that the Wolesi Jirga will aim to achieve in the period 2011-2016. These strategic goals are ambitious but realistic, and focus on the core functions of the legislature - legislation, oversight and representation - as well as strategic goals relating to ensuring that the Wolesi Jirga has the general institutional capacity to operate effectively as a legislature.



# VISION, MISSION, GUIDING VALUES

## Vision

To embody the democratic principles of the Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, and to exemplify and maintain the highest standards of national governance

## Mission

To represent the will of all the people of Afghanistan and hold itself accountable to them

To fulfil the role of the nation's highest legislative body

To oversee the performance of Government

## Guiding Values

Supremacy of national interest

Respect for human rights and gender

Accountability and transparency

Operational efficiency and effectiveness

Strengthening the dignity of parliament

# Strategic Goal 1 - Improve the legislative process in the Wolesi Jirga

## 1.1 Providing a Manual and Training on the legislative process for all MPs

During the period 2011-2016, the House will increase the capacity of MPs and their understanding of the legislative process by providing training courses and keeping under review the handbook provided for MPs on the legislative process.

## 1.2 Delivering Training for MPs on amending legislation

During the legislative process, Members are able to amend legislation. During the period 2011-2016, we will provide training for MPs in order to increase their capacity to develop and propose amendments to draft legislation.

## 1.3 Delivering Training for MPs on proposing legislation

The Rules of Procedure outline the way in which Members can propose and initiate legislation. We will build the capacity of MPs to initiate legislation by providing training for MPs in this area.

## 1.4 Strengthening the capacity of the legislative drafting staff

Within the Wolesi Jirga Secretariat, legislative staff provide support to Members in drafting legislation and amendments to draft legislation. In order to ensure that high quality draft legislation and amendments are produced, we will develop the capacity of the staff by ensuring that they receive technical assistance and training.

## 1.5 Capacitating Commissions in the Legislative Process

Commissions are key to the legislative process. In order to improve the legislative process, in the period 2011-2016, we will implement measures to improve legislative scrutiny in Commissions. Such measures will include providing training for Commission staff, providing training for Commission Chairs and Commission Members and ensuring that Commissions receive additional technical and expert advice during the legislative process.

## 1.6 Developing an open and transparent legislative process

The House is committed to ensuring that the legislative process is open and transparent and recognise that civil society and the general public can provide valuable input to the legislative process. In order to achieve this aim, during the period 2011-2015 there will be increased use of Public Hearings by Commissions when considering draft legislation.

## **1.7 Developing effective communication processes with the Executive on legislative matters**

The House recognises that in order for the legislative process to work effectively, the Wolesi Jirga and the Executive need to develop effective communication processes. In consultation with the Executive, we will develop increasingly effective communication mechanisms between the Wolesi Jirga and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs and individual Ministries. In addition, we will move to offer training for staff jointly in both the Wolesi Jirga and the Executive to ensure that these communication mechanisms are used effectively.

## **1.8 Improving the capacity for budget review and analysis**

The national budget is scrutinised in the Finance Commission and approved by National Assembly. In order to ensure that there is adequate scrutiny of the budget, in the period 2011-2016 we will ensure that the capacity of the Finance Commission to undertake this task will be increased. Such measures will include delivering additional training for Commission members and staff and providing expert technical assistance to the Commission during the budget process. In addition, the House will move to strengthen the vitally important Budget Office through increased training and technical assistance.

## **1.9 Implementing a legislative status system**

In order to increase the effectiveness of the legislative process in the Wolesi Jirga, in the period 2011-2016, we will further develop the legislative tracking system which will allow for the tracking of draft legislation as Bills pass through the various stages of review, amendment, and adoption in both Houses of the National Assembly.

## **1.10 Developing Regulatory and Social Impact Assessments**

When scrutinising and discussing legislation, the House fully recognises the need for Members to have access to relevant information with particular regards to the likely impact of the proposed legislation. During the period 2011-2016, we will move to provide guidance and assistance to Commissions in conducting Regulatory Impact Assessments and Social Impact Assessments to accompany Commission reports on legislation.

## **Strategic Goal 2 - Improve the capacity of the Wolesi Jirga to provide effective oversight of the Executive**

### **2.1 Providing a Manual and Training for MPs on oversight**

During the period 2011-2016, we will increase the capacity of MPs to conduct effective oversight by providing training courses, and providing MPs with an easy to use handbook on both the concept of Executive oversight and the mechanisms available in the Wolesi Jirga to undertake effective oversight.

### **2.2 Increasing Oversight through Commissions**

The Wolesi Jirga recognises that Commissions provide an effective environment for in-depth oversight of the Executive, both on specific policy issues and on the general performance of Ministries. In the period 2011-2016 we will move to ensure that every Commission in the Wolesi Jirga develops an annual work plan which includes a timetable for enquiries and the opportunity for regular scrutiny sessions with the relevant Ministers. It is vitally important in this regard that there is an accurate record of Commissions' deliberations. Therefore this work plan will include provision for each Commission session in public to be recorded and a 'near verbatim' record of the evidence given to the Commission to be kept for the public record. The House will place a special priority for further strengthening the Budget Office as notes in 1.8. Finally, we shall review that the number and remit of the present commissions to ensure the most effective oversight possible of the Executive.

### **2.3 Ensuring Public Input to the Oversight process**

Ensuring that Afghan citizens can be involved in the work of the Wolesi Jirga, and in particular the oversight work of the Commissions, will be a high priority for the period 2011-2016. Commission workplans will include mechanisms to provide for increased interaction between the Commissions and key stakeholders such as civil society as well as the general public when undertaking investigations into Executive policy or the effectiveness of legislation.

### **2.4 Increasing Communication and Cooperation with the Executive on Oversight**

In order to ensure that oversight of the Executive is effective, the Wolesi Jirga recognises that mechanisms needs to be developed which will ensure that the information flow between the Wolesi Jirga and the Executive is effective. In consultation with the Executive branch of Government, in the period 2011-2016 we will work to develop processes that will provide for Commissions with more effective mechanisms to receive and send information to the respective Ministries, and deepen co-operation generally.

## **2.5 Ensuring more effective Research for Members**

In order for Members to provide effective oversight of the Executive on behalf of the citizens of Afghanistan, the House recognises the need for members to be provided with professional and effective research support. In the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will move to **strengthen the Research Department** by providing additional training and technical assistance to the Secretariat staff in this field. In addition, we will develop a training programme on effective Research techniques for Wolesi Jirga members. **Finally, we will take steps to develop the library and library services.**

## **2.6 Establishing and capacitating a Public Accounts Commission**

The House remains committed to full public financial transparency and accountability, and ensuring that the Wolesi Jirga plays a central role in combating corruption in Afghanistan. Early in the period 2011-2016, we will discuss with the Meshrano Jirga the establishment of a powerful Public Accounts Commission responsible for ensuring parliamentary oversight of the Executive on financial matters. In order to ensure that the Public Accounts Commission is effective we recognise that the Commission Members and staff will need capacity building measures including training and the Commission itself will require a high level of technical assistance. The Wolesi Jirga is committed to providing this high level of assistance needed for the Commission to become fully capacitated and effective.

## **Strategic Goal 3 - Strengthen the leadership and representative roles of MPs**

### **3.1 Developing a Handbook for MPs and providing training on Representation**

In addition to their legislative and oversight responsibilities, Members of Wolesi Jirga are important leaders both in their constituencies and nationally. All Members of the Wolesi Jirga have been elected to Parliament from constituencies and one of their core functions is therefore to provide representation for their constituents at a national level. The Wolesi Jirga is committed to supporting Members in their representative roles and will produce a 'user friendly' manual and training for Members on what 'representation' means and mechanisms they can use to better represent constituents. This manual and the training will include a specific component on how to liaise with and represent female constituents.

### **3.2 Increased Capacity of the Women's Caucus**

Members of the Wolesi Jirga not only represent the constituencies from which they were elected but also have a wider representation role and it is vitally important that the views of all sections of society is reflected in the Wolesi Jirga. The work of the Wolesi Jirga Women's Caucus plays an important role both in supporting the work of female Members and also provides a platform for the discussions of related issues in the Wolesi Jirga. In light of the importance of the Women's Caucus, in the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will provide administrative and technical support to the Women's Caucus. This will include developing a vigorous training programme for female MPs and providing technical assistance to assist the caucus with its development and strengthening.

### **3.3 Encourage the establishment of subject interest groups in the House**

The House recognises the variety of interests which MPs have. We wish to encourage those within a parliamentary context recognising the capacity for such informal groups to stimulate the capacity of MPs to provide oversight and legislative scrutiny, and in general to facilitate positive parliamentary links to Afghan society. Therefore we will encourage the creation of such groups which would be led by MPs but would include participants from outside parliament. We will consider the facilitation of modest practical resources to encourage their establishment.

### **3.4 Examine the scope for the development of political groups in the Wolesi Jirga**

Political groupings within the House can have an important impact upon the way business is conducted and the House's effectiveness. Over the planning period, the House will explore the potential of the groups with the objective of understanding their dynamics and encouraging positive impacts.

## **Strategic Goal 4 – Increase the Outreach work of the Wolesi Jirga**

### **4.1 Developing a Communication Strategy**

The Wolesi Jirga recognises that it has a duty to ensure that there is effective communication between the Parliament and the people. Whilst the majority of this responsibility lies with the elected Members who are the bridge between the people and the national level, the Wolesi Jirga *as an institution* also has a responsibility to communicate effectively with the people with regards to the role of the legislature and the work being undertaken in the Wolesi Jirga. In order to develop more effective strategic interventions for communicating with citizens, the Wolesi Jirga will develop a communication strategy and the Public Information Department will be responsible for implementing this strategy in the period 2011-2016.

### **4.2 Developing a Radio and TV Station**

Effective communication will entail the Wolesi Jirga utilising effective communication methods in order to provide information to citizens on the work of the legislature. Basing itself on progress made in this area to date, in the period 2011-2016 the Wolesi Jirga will aim to establish fully functioning Parliament Radio and Parliament Television Channels which will be key drivers in ensuring that citizens receive increased information on the work of the Wolesi Jirga.

### **4.3 Producing Newsletters and Information materials**

The House recognises the need to develop and produce materials for the public and key stakeholders outlining the work of the Wolesi Jirga. In the period 2011-2016 the Wolesi Jirga Public Information Department will further develop information facts sheets on the work of the Wolesi Jirga in addition to continuing to produce a regular Parliament bulletin. We will ensure that all such materials produced will be distributed to libraries and information points throughout the country as well as making them available to download from the Parliament website.

### **4.4 Strengthening the Schools Programme**

The Parliament schools programme allows children from schools in the country to visit the Parliament to learn about the way in which the Parliament operates and the role of the Parliament in Afghanistan. This schools programme plays an important role in deepening democracy in the country and in the period 2011-2016 we are committed to strengthening this programme and increasing the quantity of those visiting Parliament and the quality of their experience.



## **4.5 Developing the Parliament Website**

Increasingly in Afghanistan citizens have access to the internet, and therefore the Wolesi Jirga recognises that the Parliament website is an important tool to disseminate information to citizens and key stakeholders. In the period 2011-2016, the website of the Wolesi Jirga will be upgraded regularly and the staff trained to ensure that it is kept updated. New sections and pages for publication of general information about the Parliament will be created in addition to up to date information on the progress of Legislation in the Wolesi Jirga, Plenary sessions, Commission work-plans and reports, and gender equality within the Wolesi Jirga. In addition, we are committed to ensuring that the website is interactive and can provide a useful forum for discussion between Members and the general public.

Training will be provided for relevant staff as required.

## **4.6 Strengthening Communication with the Media**

The Wolesi Jirga recognises that in order to provide information to citizens on the work being undertaken in the Parliament, the national media must have the capacity to understand the way in which the Wolesi Jirga operates and up to date information on issues being discussed in the Parliament. In the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will work closely with the media and will provide briefing sessions and capacity building training for the media, focussing in particular on the 'lobby' or 'pool', on the legislative process in the Parliament and the general work that is undertaken by the Wolesi Jirga.

## **4.7 Increasing Interaction with Civil Society Organisations**

Civil Society Organisations in Afghanistan can play a very important role in providing an additional link between society and Members of the Wolesi Jirga. We recognise that the Wolesi Jirga can play a key role in facilitating increased interaction between Members and civil society organisations both at a national level and at constituency level. During the period 2011-2016, we will move to strengthen the Public Information Department in the Wolesi Jirga to include a specific responsibility for liaising with civil society. Over the period of this strategic plan we will move to provide members with up to date information on Civil Society Organisations working at a national level and a local level in their constituencies.

The Wolesi Jirga also recognises the important role that civil society can play in providing information to members which is crucial to effective decision making when undertaking legislative and oversight duties. The Wolesi Jirga is therefore committed to working closely with civil society in the period 2011-2016 and will look to build on

and increase the number of highly successful briefing sessions delivered by the Wolesi Jirga for Civil Society organisations on the role of the legislature and possible avenues for increased interaction. In addition to these briefing sessions we will ensure that international publications in the subject of civil society / legislature relations are translated into the local languages and distributed to Members, Wolesi Jirga Staff and to Civil Society organisations.

#### **4.8 Strengthening the Youth Parliament**

The Wolesi Jirga supports the strengthening of the Youth Parliament. The Youth Parliament is an effective way of educating a new generation on the work of the legislature provides an important platform for the new generation of Afghans to express their views on issues at a national level. The Wolesi Jirga will work with the Meshrano Jirga to ensure that in the period 2011-2016 the Youth Parliament continues to be an annual event and that the Youth Parliament can expand with the aim of ensuring representation from all provinces in the country.

## **Strategic Goal 5 – Increase the institutional capacity of the Parliament in order to maximise efficiency**

### **5.1 Strengthening the Afghan Parliament Institute**

The Afghan Parliament Institute was created in order to provide members and staff with important professional development opportunities. During the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga Human Resources Department and the Afghan Parliament Institute will work closely together, in collaboration with the Meshrano Jirga, to develop and coordinate professional development opportunities for Members and staff. This will include the provision of rolling professional development programme on basic skills, and fact based Afghan sector and policy briefings for Members.

### **5.2 Undertaking a staff training needs assessment**

The Wolesi Jirga recognises that in order for Members to legislate effectively, oversee the activities of the Executive and fulfil their representation duties, they need to be supported by a well trained and professional secretariat. Therefore, we are committed to developing a workplace of excellence and providing Secretariat staff with training and capacity building activities in order for them to function progressively more effectively, in particularly the ability to implement, monitor, and evaluate the *Strategic Plan*. In order to develop a sustainable staff training programme and in order to maximise the impact of staff training, we commit to undertaking a staff training needs assessment and the development of an implementation plan for the training. We will ensure that the Human Resources Department is adequately resourced for this purpose.

### **5.3 Creating mechanisms for effective intra-Parliament communication**

The Afghan Constitution sets out the bi-cameral nature of the Parliament and the specific roles and responsibilities of both Houses. The Wolesi Jirga reiterates its commitment to working closely with the Meshrano Jirga in order to ensure that Parliament as a whole operates effectively and efficiently. In order to achieve this aim, we create with the Meshrano Jirga transparent mechanisms for regular communication between the Secretariats of the Houses, and between the Administration Boards.

## 5.4 Capacitating newly elected Members

During the period 2011-2016, national elections will be held and it is likely that new Members will be elected to the Wolesi Jirga who have no previous experience as legislators. We recognise our duty to ensure that newly elected Members receive a comprehensive induction course on the roles, duties and responsibilities of Members of Parliament. We will build on the success of the orientation programme delivered by the Wolesi Jirga following the 2010 elections to ensure that newly elected members benefit from this orientation and induction programme.

## 5.5 Developing an e-parliament

The Wolesi Jirga believes that there is an important linkage between technology, parliament and democracy. The rapid growth of information and communication technologies (ICT) impacts not only on the economy of Afghanistan but also the environment within which the Parliament operates. Creating an e-Parliament in Afghanistan will modernize parliamentary processes, increase transparency, accountability and participation, and improve inter-parliamentary cooperation. Improving operations to record the plenary sessions of the House ('Hansard') are a vital aspect of this process and the House commits to continuous improvement in Hansard arrangements seeking to identify and establish best practice. During the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will seek to utilise the expertise of the Global Centre for ICT in Parliament in order to create an e-Parliament. The House will explore what capacity there is to extend e-communications between the Executive and the Wolesi Jirga, for example, an e-legislative system with the Ministry of Justice and the Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs (MOPA); and e-correspondence with the MOPA.

## 5.6 Developing a Code of Ethics for MPs

The Wolesi Jirga notes that order for the citizens of Afghanistan to have full confidence in the legislative branch of Government, Members must be seen to be leading the country as exemplars of openness, transparency and the delivery good governance. Therefore, during the period 2011-2016 the Jirga will develop, introduce, and publish a Code of Ethics for Members. The Code of Ethics will specify the public duties of Members of the Jirga and the personal conduct expected of them in public and in the Parliament.

## 5.7 Gender Mainstreaming in the Wolesi Jirga

The Wolesi Jirga is committed to mainstreaming gender in all work undertaken in the legislature. During the period 2011-2016, gender training will be undertaken in the Parliament and will target female and male MPs, staff, as well as all the Parliamentary Commissions. This comprehensive approach aims to emphasise that gender should be seen as a cross-cutting issue that affects the whole of society and therefore the responsibility of all and not only that of women in Parliament. The Wolesi Jirga has a responsibility to play in terms of its oversight and legislative functions with regard to gender mainstreaming in all policy areas, and activities falling under all strategic goals and will take this into consideration when this *Strategic Plan* is being implemented.

## 5.8 Ensuring effective Corporate Governance in the Wolesi Jirga

The Wolesi Jirga Administration Board is the body charged with responsibility for running the House, including ensuring that the legislature is in a position to respond to the requirements of serving MPs effectively and making progress towards implementing the strategic vision of the institution, in addition to developing a new Strategic Plan for 2016-2021. Therefore, capacity building measures, including the sharing of best practices and training sessions, are needed for the Administration Board to allow them to fulfil this role.

## 5.9 Moving towards Parliamentary Administration self sufficiency

In order to address the significant problem of staff recruitment and retention, and in recognition of its status, the Wolesi Jirga recognises the need strengthen its control progressively over the appointment of its senior staff and budget in line with its own capacities. During the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will work with the Ministry of Finance and other government bodies as necessary in order to discuss ways in which the legislature may increasingly take responsibility for these important functions. In addition, the Wolesi Jirga will seek innovative solutions to the retention problems from the international community.

## 5.10 Increased International Participation

The Parliament actively participates in various regional, continental and international forums to promote Afghanistan on the world stage and in order to build the capacity of members and the Secretariat. This includes working with the Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Asia Parliament Union, the Islamic Countries Parliament Union and other key international organisations and networks.

In order to facilitate our interaction with these international organisations, we will develop an International Relations policy in order to guide our interaction with the rest of the world, to provide for 'friendship links' with other parliaments, and to ensure that international visits to the Wolesi Jirga achieve maximum impact.

In addition, during the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga will implement a rigorous reporting and dissemination of information policy following internal engagement in order to ensure that all Members and all relevant staff in the Secretariat benefit from this field of activity.

## **Strategic Goal 6 – To ensure that the physical infrastructure of the Parliament is of a high standard**

### **6.1 Ensuring high quality Infrastructure in the new Parliament building**

During the period of this strategic plan a new Parliament building is scheduled for completion. This new building will house both the chambers of the Wolesi Jirga and the Meshrano Jirga and a limited number of offices for Secretariat staff from both Houses. In order to continue to provide a high level of support to members, it is essential that these new offices are fully equipped with furniture, ICT equipment and telephones. Requirements are detailed in the attached Annex.

### **6.2 Televising Parliamentary Proceedings**

In order to increase transparency and openness, in the period 2011-2016, the Wolesi Jirga aims to increase the amount of content broadcast. This commitment to increase coverage of events in the Wolesi Jirga will lead to the need for modern infrastructure in the Parliament. Fixed, remotely controlled television cameras need to be installed in the chamber and in commission rooms. The Wolesi Jirga will aim to broadcast chamber and commission proceedings both through the national broadcasters, through the Parliament's own TV and radio stations, and through live web streaming on the Parliament's website.

### **6.3 Operationalising printing infrastructure**

In order for the Wolesi Jirga to minimise expenditure on contracting out the costs of printing parliamentary papers and publications, the House will aim to ensure that the Parliament's printing press, donated by the UNDP/SEAL 1 project, is fully operational early on in the period 2011-2016.

### **6.4 Ensuring that the Parliament can operate safely and effectively**

In the planning period, insuring that the Security Affairs Department of the Parliament is provided with the necessary equipment so that the Parliament remains safe and secure is a priority for the Wolesi Jirga. The House will ensure that additional secure equipment is procured as required, and that all three Parliament sites are well protected. In addition, we will provide the security staff with up to date training in this area.

## **6.5 Examine the practicality of establishing provincial constituency premises; and mobile premises for the House**

It is essential that MPs have a secure and appropriate constituency base to allow constituents to interact with them and to signal the presence of the House through the country. The House will examine what can be done to provide MPs with suitable and secure constituency premises, inviting the Executive to participate in a needs assessment.

In certain circumstances mobile premises (tent, caravan) can be a useful to 'bring the House to the people'. The House will explore what can be done to provide this within the planning period.



**ANNEX to 6.1 Ensuring high quality Infrastructure in the new Parliament building. Detail of requirements.**

***To be completed - awaiting information from the House***

## IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING, EVALUATION

To be effective, the activities arising from the *Strategic Plan: 2011-2016* require implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The following section describes how this will be achieved and identifies those responsible.

### ***Strategic Goals***

The *Strategic Plan: 2011 – 2016*, sets clear strategic goals for parliament based on the vision, mission statement, and guiding values. The *Plan* also identifies those priority activities which will be required to attain the goals.

### ***Implementation Roadmap***

This *Strategic Plan* is, therefore, accompanied by its Implementation Roadmap, provides a framework for the production of Strategy Annual Work Plans (SAWPs – see below). Through the SAWPs, the *Strategic Plan* goals will be accomplished. The Implementation Roadmap outlines a proposed timetable for the implementation of the activities proposed in the *Strategic Plan*. Planning at long range is highly challenging mainly owing to the need to address unanticipated events. The Implementation Roadmap is, therefore, pitched at a level of detail which allows for flexible activity implementation over the course of the planning period.

### ***Strategy Annual Work Plans***

Work plans will be created to provide for short term annualised planning. The SAWPs will reflect the strategic goals outlined in this *Strategic Plan* and the activities outlined in the Implementation Roadmap but at a much greater level of detail, monthly. The SAWPs will, in effect, be the detailed annual implementation plans for the *Strategic Plan*, broken down by month, reflecting the particular requirements of the House.

The SAWPs will include specific indicators of success for actual specific House activities. But within the context of this *Strategic Plan*, the broad indicators of success for the outlined Strategic Goals will be:

***Strategic Goal 1:***

The qualitative and quantitative capacity of the House to process legislation is significantly improved.

***Strategic Goal 2:***

The ability of the House to address oversight functions comprehensively and positively is significantly enhanced.

***Strategic Goal 3:***

The capacity of members of the House, individually and corporately, to provide leadership to the nation is developed.

***Strategic Goal 4:***

The positive impact and intervention of the House and its members on the everyday life of citizens and the life of the nation is increased.

***Strategic Goal 5:***

The core and support business of the House is managed in a progressively more effective, efficient, and transparent manner using economies of scale and joint working between the Houses where this would promote effectiveness, efficiency, and value for money.

***Strategic Goal 6:***

To manage the challenge of sustaining the continuity of parliamentary business while providing fully for the requirements of fitting out a new parliamentary building and attached offices.

***Implementation responsibilities***

Overall responsibility for the implementation and delivery of the strategic plan lies with the President of the House and the Administrative Board who are responsible to the House.

Day to day responsibility is devolved by the President and the Administrative Board upon the Secretary General of the House and the administrative staff. The direct work of managing and monitoring the implementation of the *Strategic Plan*, Implementation Roadmap, and AWP is the responsibility of the Secretary General who will put in place appropriate Secretariat structures of co-operation and co-ordination, within the House and with the Meshrano Jirga where appropriate, which will be responsible for managing and monitoring the implementation of the *Strategic Plan*, and day to day donor coordination.

Under the guidance of the Secretary General, these structures will develop House-specific SAWPs and assume responsibility for their monitoring and evaluation; and will additionally provide a monthly update report to the Secretary General on progress made. The Secretary General will provide formal written updates to the President of the House and the Administrative Board every three months.

When undertaking monitoring and evaluation, the Secretary General will use international best practice to measure actual performance against envisaged outputs and goals; identify causes for delays or implementation failures; and propose relevant measures to remove any barriers to successful implementation.

### ***Annual reports on the Strategic Plan***

A written Annual Report for the House outlining progress made in implementing the *Strategic Plan: 2011-2016* through the SAWP for each House will be drafted under the direction of the Secretary General, endorsed by the President of the House and the Administrative Board, distributed to all Members, and made available to the public on the National Assembly's website. The reports will be capable of being debated in the House on a motion of the President.

The House is committed to undertaking a final evaluation of *Strategic Plan: 2011-2016* in January 2016 and developing a successor plan (*Strategic Plan: 2017 – 2022*) within 6 months for agreement by the House before the end of 2016 reflecting the then current developing requirements of the parliament and Afghanistan.

## Resource Mobilisation

International partners have been of cardinal importance to the development of the House, and the National Assembly of Afghanistan generally, since the run up to our successful inauguration in 2005.

In the five years since then, our partnerships have deepened with organisations committed to assisting with the development of the Assembly. Such partnerships have succeeded in helping us to strengthen the legislature within the governance structures of Afghanistan, and have enhanced the legislative, oversight and representation functions of the Assembly. We shall continue to look to the international community to support the Assembly's development over this planning period.

The National Assembly recognises that in order to deliver the challenging *Strategic Plan* for the period 2011-2016 outlined above, additional resources will need to be mobilised. Consequently we seek imaginative and effective partner initiatives to implement the Plan, including joint programmes, exchanges and financial assistance.

The House, in partnership with its brother House, will propose holding an early joint meeting with development partners in order to present this agreed *Strategic Plan for 2011-2016*, and to develop a resource mobilisation plan. The House is confident that development partners will continue to support the important work we are undertaking and, in particular, the specific requirement to implement the *Strategic Plan* vigorously recognizing that it will lead to a more effective, efficient and relevant legislature for the citizens of Afghanistan.

Finally, we wish to highlight Afghanistan's endorsement of the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* to streamline development programmes, make aid more effective, and reduce the bureaucratic burden on beneficiaries. The increased level of administrative capacity, needed by Parliament when cooperating with a range of development partners, is significant.

We shall be considering, therefore, what appropriate day-to-day donor co-ordination arrangements should be in place to ensure that resources provided are used progressively more effectively.