

## Afghan parties must agree on 'convincing peace process' to end 40 years of conflict, says UN envoy

21 December 2017 – The United Nations envoy for Afghanistan on Thursday highlighted the need for the country to achieve a political settlement with the armed opposition, pointing to an upcoming February meeting between the parties as an opportunity not to be missed.

“We must use the upcoming winter months, when conflict levels tend to decrease, to advance on this issue before the cycle of violence is renewed next spring,” Tadamichi Yamamoto, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, [told](#) the Security Council.

“I once again call on the Taliban to express a clear willingness to begin negotiations towards a political settlement, and to start the initial dialogue,” he said.

In that context, he highlighted the significance of the ‘Kabul Process’ meeting, to be held on 1 February 2018, where the Government is expected to present a strategic concept for reaching the settlement, as an opportunity that must not be missed.

The so called Kabul Process spells out a transition to greater Afghan responsibility and ownership, in both security and civilian areas.

Mr. Yamamoto, also the head of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan ([UNAMA](#)), informed the 15-member Council of the holding of the parliamentary elections next year, followed by presidential elections in April 2019.

Timely, credible and accepted elections, he elaborated, are vital to maintain constitutional order and keep faith in the representative system of Government.

Above all, the security and women’s political participation are vitally important the three key factors, added the UN envoy.

Also in the briefing, Mr. Yamamoto spoke of the country’s regional relationships and expressed concern over increased military activities between Afghanistan and neighbouring Pakistan, and called on the two countries to find ways to collaborate more effectively to address the issues that affect the populations of both countries.

In closing, the senior UN official said that the Organization remains committed to advancing peace and prosperity in the country.

“I truly hope that empathy for the ongoing suffering of millions of Afghans will move us all to make the efforts necessary to achieve peace and realize the important opportunities that lie beyond a much needed peace agreement,”

he said.