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**ADVISORY SERVICES AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION IN
THE FIELD OF HUMAN RIGHTS**

Technical cooperation in the field of human rights in Afghanistan

Note by the Secretary-General*

* The present document was submitted late to enable reflection on updated information.

1. At its sixtieth session, the Commission on Human Rights, through the Chairperson's Statement entitled "Technical cooperation in the field of human rights in Afghanistan", requested the Secretary-General "(i) to extend the mandate of the independent expert for a further year, as well as to ensure that a senior gender adviser in the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan [UNAMA] is appointed immediately and with due regard to the need for continuity in this task; (ii) to provide the independent expert with all necessary assistance in carrying out his mandate and to provide adequate resources, from within existing overall United Nations resources, to fund the activities of the independent expert and the High Commissioner in providing advisory services and technical cooperation; (iii) to remain seized of the matter and to report on it at the next session of the Commission".

2. Mr. M. Cherif Bassiouni was appointed independent expert by the Secretary-General in April 2004. He submitted a statement to the sixtieth session of the Commission (E/CN.4/2004/102/Add.1). The independent expert held consultations in Geneva on 28 and 29 April 2004. From 14 to 22 August 2004, he undertook a mission to Afghanistan. He presented his report (A/59/370) to the Third Committee of the General Assembly, which he addressed on 26 October 2004. The independent expert intends to undertake a second mission in Afghanistan at the end of January 2005, and will report to the sixty-first session of the Commission.

3. A gender adviser commenced at UNAMA in December 2003 and left in October 2004. Subsequently, UNAMA has enhanced the role by establishing a Gender Unit consisting of a gender adviser (ad interim pending recruitment), a gender officer and national staff operating within the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

4. Resources to cover activities relating to the independent expert's mandate were provided from the regular budget of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. Resources to contribute to activities relating to the project of advisory services and technical cooperation were provided from voluntary contributions. Both activities were supported by a desk officer based at OHCHR Geneva.

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