



## **PRESS RELEASE: Launch of Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society**

### **NEW INSTITUTE PROMOTES EXCELLENCE IN CIVIL SOCIETY**

**Kabul, Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, 17 February 2015** – A new Institute promoting Afghanistan civil society was launched today in Kabul.

The Afghanistan Institute for Civil Society’s objective is to act as an independent, national agency that raises the credibility of civil society actors, by certifying them in accordance with locally defined and internationally recognized standards.

The Institute will also focus on coordination of civil society building efforts, and liaison with government, donors, the private sector and civil society.

AICS aspires to enhance the quality, competence and merit of civil society across Afghanistan and to support an enabling environment to encourage the growth of a vibrant and credible civil society sector in the country.

The AICS establishment process is being facilitated by the [Aga Khan Development Network](#) (AKDN) in partnership with Counterpart International. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) is providing financial support through its [Afghanistan Civic Engagement Programme \(ACEP\) project](#).

“Civil society’s role in Afghanistan’s development has grown enormously over the last decade. This Institute will provide ways in which civil society, government and the private sector can work together for the public good” said AKDN Diplomatic Representative, Mrs. Nurjehan Mawani speaking at the launch.

“The Institute will contribute to growing a cadre of credible civil society organizations to partner with government in addressing Afghanistan’s development challenges” stated the Chief Executive of the National Unity Government, Dr. Abdullah Abdullah, echoing his address at the London Conference on Afghanistan.

“This institute underscores our commitment in ensuring civil society plays a major role in supporting Afghanistan’s social, economic and political future.” said United States Ambassador Mr. P. Michael McKinley.

“By improving the efficiency, transparency and effectiveness of local organisations, AICS will expand the role of civil society in the development process of Afghanistan.” observed Chair of the AICS Board of Directors, Dr, Habiba Sarabi.

The Executive Director of the AICS is newly appointed Mr. Maiwand Rahyab.

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