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DEPUTY SECRETARY GENERAL'S SPEECH
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Ladies and Gentlemen,

Let me start by thanking the New Zealand Institute for International Affairs and the Centre for Strategic Studies for their kind invitation and hosting of this event. Our hosts have been important drivers behind the security debate here in New Zealand. And I welcome the chance to speak here today.

New Zealand has a proud history of contributing to maintaining security both in this region, and worldwide. Lately that has ranged from deploying troops to Afghanistan, to investing in peace keeping and disaster relief across the Pacific.

Despite the physical distance between us, the relationship between NATO and New Zealand has grown stronger and stronger. We are not only united by common values – we also face common challenges. And I believe that this has transformed our relationship into a genuine security partnership.

As your 2010 Defence Review articulated clearly, when it comes to security, geography is no longer a safeguard; distance is no longer a deterrent; and isolation no longer a viable policy option. Globalisation has changed our security environment profoundly. And just like New Zealand, NATO is responding to that change.

In many ways globalisation has brought enormous benefits. It is difficult now to remember what life was like before the internet. Today the web allows us instant communication and instant access to information across the world. It makes huge financial transactions across thousands of miles possible within seconds.

As consumers, our choice and our freedom have never been greater.

But with every opportunity, comes a risk. Security threats, too, have become globalised and increasingly indivisible. Weak states halfway across the globe can have a direct impact on our daily lives, as we have learned to our cost.

Afghanistan is a case in point. This year marks the 10th anniversary of 9/11. On that terrible day ten years ago, Al Qaeda used airliners to cause death and destruction. More than 90 countries lost citizens, including New Zealand. Those devastating attacks embodied a new kind of terrorism, one that is indiscriminate about its victims or methods.

Over the last decade, terrorist organisations, criminal networks and fragile states have put more and more pressure on our international rules based order. Off the coast of Africa, Somali pirates continue to threaten vital trade routes. Cyber attacks have become a prevalent threat – with NATO alone suffering up to 100 attacks a day. And where governance is weak, organised crime flourishes, leading to the trafficking of people, drugs and weapons.

To meet these global challenges, and to defeat them, we need new thinking, and new ways of addressing security. We need an integrated response with much greater cooperation between states, international organisations, international financial institutions, the private sector and non governmental organisations.

We need to work in partnership.

This is the great lesson we draw from Afghanistan. There, NATO, at the request of the Afghan government and mandated by the UN Security Council – has been leading a unique multinational coalition for peace.

Our International Security Assistance Force is made up of 48 countries. 28 NATO countries and 20 other nations, from across the globe, including of course New Zealand, which is the third largest non-NATO ISAF contributor. Our common aim is to help create a stable and peaceful Afghanistan that will never again be a safe haven for terrorists.

This is an extremely demanding mission. A mission in which, very sadly, many of our brave soldiers have been killed or wounded. And I would like to offer my heartfelt condolences to the family and friends of the New Zealand soldiers who have lost their lives or been wounded in Afghanistan. I want to assure you that their sacrifice was not in vain.

But despite the challenges, we are making progress. The Taliban are under pressure everywhere - as we take the fight to them. For example, in the South, for the first time, the Taliban have given up control of all the districts around the major centre of Kandahar. We are clearing more and more areas, and we are holding them.

Our resolve is strong, our strategy is sound, and we have in place the necessary resources to accomplish it.

2011 will be a key year in that effort, as we start the process of transition and give the Afghans the lead responsibility for maintaining their own security.

We fully support the aim of President Karzai to see the Afghan forces in the lead for security across all of Afghanistan by the end of 2014. No-one wants our forces to be in combat roles a day longer than is necessary. But, transition will be conditions-based; it will not be calendar-driven. We will not transition until we are ready, and the Afghan forces are ready. Because, progress must be irreversible. Once we hand over the security lead to the Afghan forces, we want them to stay in the lead.

And let me make this clear. This is not a rush for the exit. NATO is in this for the long term.

ISAF will still be in Afghanistan after transition, but in a supporting role, training the Afghan security forces. So - if the Taliban or anyone else thinks they can wait us out – they are wrong. Because we will stay until the job is finished.

At the NATO Lisbon Summit in November last year, the Alliance and Afghanistan signed a “long term partnership agreement” with the Afghan government. Demonstrating our commitment and continued support to the Afghan people beyond 2014.

Your Foreign Minister, Minister McCully, was there at the summit, to witness the signing of the agreement and participating actively in the high level discussion on the mission’s progress. And given what I have heard during my official talks here in Wellington, I have no doubt that New Zealand shares that strong and valued commitment to Afghanistan.

The Lisbon Summit was not only important for our engagement in Afghanistan – it was also a major milestone on the road to reform of the NATO Alliance, as we adapt to the 21st century security environment. At Lisbon we adopted a new Strategic Concept – a business plan for the future of the Alliance, which aims to deliver a NATO that is more effective, efficient and engaged

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- 3 -

22/03/2011 13:29

Firstly, we want to make NATO more effective in meeting modern risks and threats, such as cyber attacks, proliferation, piracy and terrorism. We identified a top ten list of key capabilities for our forces – including helicopter transport, medical support and countering road-side bombs. We agreed that NATO should develop a missile defence capability, to defend Europe against the growing threat of missile attack. And we also took the historic step of inviting Russia to work with us on missile defence.

Secondly, we must make the Alliance more efficient – to eliminate what we no longer need, and to invest where our real needs lie. We want to cut our fat and build up our muscle. And make sure we give our citizen's value for money on defence, particularly in this time of international financial crisis and budget constraints.

A third, key objective is to enhance NATO's engagement with other actors on the global scene. There was a strong consensus at Lisbon on the unique value of NATO's partnerships. Over the past two decades, NATO has built ties to more than 50 countries on 5 continents. We engage our partners in political dialogue and practical cooperation. And a growing number of partners also work with us in operations -- from Afghanistan to the Balkans, and from the Mediterranean Sea to the waters off the coast of Somalia.

In a world where security is increasingly globalised, NATO cannot successfully deliver stability and peace for its members, alone. And so it makes sense that NATO offers all our partners around the globe – including New Zealand – more dialogue and more opportunities for cooperation.

Lisbon already showed what we can achieve, when – together with President Medvedev – we launched a new phase in NATO-Russia relations, inviting Russia to work with us on missile defence. We also stepped up our co-operation with Russia to stabilise Afghanistan, and to fight terrorism and piracy. Now this does not mean that we see eye to eye with Russia on everything – on issues like Kosovo and Georgia and NATO enlargement, for instance, we still have disagreements of principle. But where we do agree is that NATO and Russia will continue to focus not on what divides us, but on what unites us, and what we can do together. Working towards a true strategic partnership.

At Lisbon, we kick-started the modernisation of a NATO's Partnership Policy. But what will this mean in practical terms for countries like New Zealand?

To begin with, we want to broaden and deepen the network of NATO's partnerships, and to make them more efficient, more flexible and more relevant to today's needs. A key objective is to reach outwards to countries like your own, who may be geographically distant from us – but who share our values and face the same security concerns. We are also willing to reach out to new partners across the globe that share our interest in peaceful international relations.

Secondly, we want to deepen our political dialogue but also to enhance our practical cooperation. Because when it comes to tackling common challenges such as terrorism, cyber crime and piracy, I am sure that there is a lot we can learn from each other – and there is a lot that we can achieve by working together.

And thirdly, we want to ensure that where partners are providing people and resources for a mission -- as you and your neighbours Australia and Tonga do in Afghanistan -- you have the fullest possible involvement in our mission planning and decision shaping.

The modernisation of NATO's partnerships is an ongoing process. It is a process in which we are keen to consult our partners, and to hear their views. That is one important reason for my visit to New Zealand. Because true partnership must be based on mutual respect and mutual benefit. And as far as the partnership between New Zealand and NATO is concerned, I certainly believe those foundations are well in place.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

- 3 -

NATO UNCLASSIFIED

- 4 -

22/03/2011 13:29

Globalisation has transformed our world. It has changed the way we do business. It also requires us to change the way that we do security in order to keep our civilians safe.

I am ever more convinced that in this globalised world -- where we face many common problems, and share common aims, the only way forward is to find common solutions.

That is very much NATO's approach to security today. We are pleased that it is also New Zealand's approach. It should allow NATO and New Zealand to further deepen our relationship, our political dialogue and our practical cooperation – and to become true security partners.

Thank you for your attention.

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- 4 -