

**UNAMA****United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan**

Strategic Communication and Spokespersons Unit, Kabul, Afghanistan

Press Statement<http://unama.unmissions.org>**UN SUPPORTS WOMEN'S SHELTERS**

KABUL, 19 JUNE 2012 – The United Nations in Afghanistan strongly supports the critical role that women's protection shelters play in providing support and safety for vulnerable Afghan women and girls, especially victims of domestic abuse and other violence. These shelters are an essential, life-saving service and play a critical role in the legal framework for eliminating violence against women.

Last year, the Ministry of Women's Affairs, working in close coordination with civil society, women's groups and the international community produced a regulatory framework for women's shelters that gave the Ministry a leading role in monitoring and oversight of all shelters. After months of engagement, including by President Karzai, a sound legal basis to ensure that shelters are run in a transparent and accountable manner was agreed. So far, there have been no reported violations of the regulation.

The Government of Afghanistan, particularly those ministries with responsibilities for administering the criminal justice system have an obligation to put in place mechanisms for effectively preventing violence against women and protecting the rights of Afghan women and girls, especially victims of all forms of domestic violence and sexual abuse. This includes ensuring the full implementation of the Elimination of Violence against Women Law and the various protection and support services that it provides for, including protection shelters for vulnerable women and girls. Official public statements should serve the interest of Afghan women and promote the implementation of laws that protect their rights.

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Kabul, Afghanistan

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