Excellency,

Your launching of the Global Strategy for Women’s and Children’s Health in 2012 marked a pivotal movement in accelerating the drive to improve the health and wellbeing of women and children around the world. Your continued leadership has ensured the articulation and acceptance of the Global Strategy for Women’s Children’s and Adolescent’s Health for 2016-30. I write to affirm Afghanistan’s full commitment to the objectives of the new phase of the Global Strategy.

Afghanistan’s commitment to the wellbeing of our women and children has been demonstrated by the significant reduction in maternal and child mortality over the last decade. More recently, we have pursued the objective through a regional initiative in January 2013 in Dubai – called Saving the Lives of Mothers and Children – and high-level held in Kabul in May 2015 – called A Call to Action: A Promise Renewed – to reduce preventable deaths among women and children.

Despite our substantial progress, Afghanistan still has unacceptably high maternal and child mortality rates, especially among the newborn. Building on the successes and lessons learned, we need to complete the unfinished Millennium Development Goals agenda and redouble our efforts for women, children and adolescents through the Sustainable Development Goals.

We, therefore, affirm our strong support for the Global Strategy (2016-30) as a global effort to bring all stakeholders together to support the work by countries to improve women’s, children’s and adolescents’ health and wellbeing. We pledge to take the needed sustainable actions to end all preventable deaths of women, children and adolescents within a generation and ensure their wellbeing.

Holding ourselves accountable for our collective progress towards this goal, we commit to:

a) End preventable maternal, neonatal, and child deaths and improve health of mothers, newborns, children and adolescents by ensuring good governance, implementing sound policies and strategies and strengthening and expanding health systems aimed at ensuring public health and quality health services for all; and.

b) Move towards self-reliance in health and pursue health reforms through greater investment in the health sector, measured by targets outlined in the accompanying commitments.

Excellency: please accept my best wishes on the 70th anniversary of the United Nations.

Mohammad Ashraf Ghani

His Excellency Ban Ki-Moon
Secretary-General of the United Nations