

INDIA FOR AFGHAN-LED PEACE TALKS

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India supports the efforts of the government and the people of Afghanistan to build an inclusive nation, External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj said at a meeting with the Foreign Ministers of Central Asian countries and Afghanistan on Sunday.

“India supports the people and the Government of Afghanistan in their efforts to build a united, sovereign, democratic, peaceful, stable, prosperous and inclusive nation. India supports all efforts for peace and reconciliation in Afghanistan which are inclusive and Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled,” Ms. Swaraj said at the India-Central Asia Dialogue at Samarkand, Uzbekistan.

Support for process

The statement indicated India’s support for a peace process that will help end the war that has haunted the country for decades.

“The violence and terror imposed on Afghan people should end. It should strengthen unity, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country,” Ms. Swaraj said in her speech at the Samarkand event.

The ministerial statement indicates India’s unchanged position regarding peace building in Afghanistan.

Last week, the Chief of the Army Staff, General Bipin Rawat, had urged India to begin talks with the Taliban in Afghanistan, which did not receive support from the government with the External Affairs Ministry saying that India wanted the peace process in Afghanistan to be “Afghan-led, Afghan-owned, and Afghan-controlled”.

Land link

A joint statement issued after the Samarkand meeting highlighted the opportunities that the collaborative platform would provide for the people of Afghanistan and asked for Kabul’s participation.

The regional Ministers described Afghanistan as a “land link” in the region that will help in connectivity among the nations.

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