



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

Mr. Naseer Ahmad FAIQ

Chargé d'Affaires of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to the United Nations

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(Please check against delivery)

Thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting and I commend you for your excellent leadership of the Council for this month.

I thank the **Ms. Roza Otunbayeva**, Special Representative of the Secretary-General, **Mr. Ramesh Rajasingham**, Director of Coordination, UNOCHA, **Ambassador José De La Gasca Lopez Dominguez**, Chair of the 1988 Sanctions Committee, and **Ms. Shaharзад Akbar**, Executive Director, Rawadari, for their briefings today.

I thank the previous speakers for reaffirming their commitments to continue supporting the fundamental human rights of the people of Afghanistan particularly women and girls, and for their ongoing efforts to help bring about real peace based the will of the people, in a stable, secure and united Afghanistan.

I also extend our appreciation to all donors, the UN system, as well as national and international NGOs for remaining engaged and continuing to provide vital humanitarian and life-saving support to the people of Afghanistan.

Moreover, I commend the United Arab Emirates for their dedicated efforts as an outgoing Council member, particularly in their role as co-penholder for Afghanistan. Their commitment to peace and security, support for stability in Afghanistan, and advocacy for human rights, especially for women and girls, deserves our utmost appreciation.

Mr. President,

As Afghanistan enters its third year under Taliban's repressive and unilateral rule, the country remains confronted with a myriad of complex challenges and uncertainty.

A staggering 29 million people are in need of humanitarian aid, and the fundamental rights of women and girls, such as the right to work and access to education, are systematically denied. Female employees of non-governmental organizations and the United Nations face restrictions on their ability to work, while female protesters are subjected to daily detention and torture. Additionally, targeted killings of Shia scholars and our fellow Hazara compatriots persist, along with extrajudicial killings of former security and defense forces. The growing presence and activities of terrorist groups in Afghanistan pose escalating and wide-ranging security threats to the country, the region and the wider world. Furthermore, the decline in humanitarian aid, natural disasters, forced migrant returns, unemployment, and poverty contribute to the prevailing uncertainty about the future.

It is crucial to recognize that the Taliban have not only failed to address these challenges but have exacerbated them. Since their forced takeover, there has been a systematic erosion of human rights, particularly the rights of women and girls, leading to gender apartheid. This not only violates human rights but directly contradicts Afghanistan's obligations under international law, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Unfortunately, it is due to the Taliban's policies and the humanitarian crisis that the human capital of Afghanistan,

including the youth, educated and professional individuals, former civil servants, and military personnel, are either unemployed or forced to leave the country.

It is evident that the current circumstances are primarily a result of the Taliban's persistent repressive policies in regard to their disregard for the demands of the Afghan people, the political impasse, the absence of a legitimate national government, coupled with the lack of a coherent and coordinated strategy by the international community to address the current tragic situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

The key question is what should we do and what the international community can do?

In this context, let me thank the members of the Security Council for adopting Resolution 2679 and the UN Secretary-General and his Special Coordinator for presenting the Independent Assessment report to the Security Council. The findings of the Independent Assessment report, are commendable in their objectivity and depth, shed light on some of the challenges our nation faces and serves as a critical reminder of the responsibilities shouldered by the international community, including this Council, towards Afghanistan.

While the report falls short of adequately recognizing the Taliban as the primary actor in the current crisis, their repressive policies, human rights violations, and certain aspects of the current situation in Afghanistan, we, in general, appreciate this timely and much-needed report. It can serve as a solid foundation and a guiding document for initiating discussions to address existing problems and fundamental challenges. Furthermore, the report's key recommendations offer a path for progress and ensuring a positive trajectory for the way forward.

We welcome the very core message of the assessment report on the fact that the status quo is not acceptable nor sustainable, and that the current international approach to Afghanistan is not working.

We further welcome the report's specific emphasis on restoring the fundamental rights of all citizens, particularly women and girls and their active participation across all fields and as well as on the necessity of establishing inclusive and broad-based governance through a national dialogue, grounded in a constitutional order and comprehensive structure.

It is crucial to underscore the need for the United Nations Security Council and all relevant partners to agree on an action plan with a defined timetable and specific conditions for implementing the report's recommendations and subsequent steps including through appointing a special coordinator as recommended in the report. This ensures that all parties, including the people of Afghanistan, are well-informed about the results of a structured, coherent, and principled international engagement. A clear understanding of the outcomes and commitments from all sides is essential for fostering transparency and accountability.

It is crucial to ensure the active and meaningful participation and contribution of Afghan women and girls in all discussions related to the implementation of the assessment report. No compromises should

be made concerning their fundamental rights, freedoms, and involvement in relevant mechanisms and processes.

I also wish to emphasize the importance of maintaining the conditionality of recommendations and a clear and benchmarked implementation process. Otherwise, serious and existing concerns about the prospects for further relaxation and normalization efforts with the Taliban without observable changes or reversals in their policies and actions will not only remain but also grow stronger. These concerns have been expressed in open letters by representatives of diverse Afghans including women activists and civil society groups. We recommend that their comments be attentively heard and thoughtfully considered in the subsequent steps of implementing the report, recognizing the valuable perspectives of women and society representatives.

Mr. President,

I would like remind this Council and the international community about increasing calls by the people of Afghanistan for rejecting any form of normalization with the Taliban regime that fails to respect human rights and international norms and to remain focused on finding a solution that results in the formation of a truly inclusive, broad-based and legitimate administration that is able to reflect the will and national aspirations of the people of Afghanistan. The path forward should be shaped by the voices of all Afghans, reflecting the country's rich diversity and the shared desire for peace and prosperity.

The Taliban's refusal to engage in dialogue and their warped interpretation of inclusivity are both unfounded and false. True inclusivity requires the Afghan people to shape their future through negotiations involving credible representatives from all segments of society, including marginalized women, youth, democratic forces, individuals free from corruption, reputable public figures, professionals in civil and military sectors, career diplomats, civil society, and human rights activists. It is crucial to establish a responsible, representative, and legitimate governance system based on the rule of law for justice and accountability. The onus is now on the Taliban to prioritize Afghanistan's national interest, by resolving the political impasse and respecting the legitimate concerns and demands of the Afghan people and international community.

Mr. President,

Let me echo the UN Secretary-General's appeal on reconsidering and halting of the forced return of Afghan refugees from Pakistan and Iran. I would like to express our sincere appreciation to the government and people of regional countries particularly Pakistan and Iran for graciously hosting Afghan refugees and ask for a compassionate and sustainable solution with support of the UNHCR and international community that prioritizes the safety, well-being, and dignity of Afghan refugees.

Mr. President,

Before concluding, I express gratitude to the Security Council for unanimously renewing the mandate of the 1988 Sanctions Monitoring Team for another year. We anticipate that this renewal will contribute to

reinforcing the effective implementation of the sanctions regime, enhancing monitoring, and reporting on the presence and activities of terrorist groups in Afghanistan and the region.

In conclusion, let us reaffirm our resolve to not merely witness the unfolding tragedy in Afghanistan but to actively participate in the creation of a just, inclusive and representative future. A future where every Afghan child can aspire to education, where women participate as equals in society, and where the basic tenets of freedom and human dignity are upheld. The Afghan people deserve no less, and we, as a community of nations, must deliver no less. Our goal must be to support the establishment of an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned political process that upholds human rights, fosters inclusive and representative governance, and ensures Afghanistan's reintegration into the international community in a manner that is consistent with international norms and values. The Afghan people have suffered enough. It is time for the international community to stand in solidarity with them and work towards a future that offers hope, dignity, and prosperity.

I thank you.