

Statement of the Foreign Minister of Pakistan, H.E. Mr. Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri, in the Security Council on 5 February 2003

Mr. President,

Let me begin by conveying our condolences to the American government and people at the tragic loss of the space shuttle, Columbia, and the loss of lives of seven astronauts.

Mr. President,

2. Germany is presiding over the Security Council at a critical moment for international peace and security. Your stewardship of the Council at this historic meeting will not only elevate our proceedings but also ensure that these will be productive in moving us towards peace.

Mr. President,

3. Allow me to join other distinguished colleagues in thanking Secretary Powell for making his important presentation to the Security Council. We welcome continuation of the US initiative to work through the United Nations in seeking the elimination of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. Operative Paragraph-10 of resolution 1441 "requests all member states to give full support to UNMOVIC and IAEA in the discharge of their mandates." We believe that the information provided today by the United States is in response to the provisions of resolution 1441. Other states possessing such information should also share this fully with the Council.

4. The extensive and effective presentation made by Secretary Powell has provided the Council considerable additional information. It will add to the knowledge-base of the Council members and, even more importantly, to the effectiveness of UNMOVIC and IAEA in carrying out their mandate. This information will enhance the ability of the inspectors to address areas of concerns and to pursue more specific lines of action in the inspection process. We, therefore, believe this is a significant step forward in responding to the challenge the Council faces in securing the full implementation of its resolutions regarding the elimination of Iraq's Weapons of Mass Destruction. We hope that the concerns raised by Secretary Powell will receive credible answers by Iraq in the inspection process.

Mr. President,

5. The Security Council has already held detailed discussions on the reports of Dr. Blix and Dr. Baradei presented to the Council on 27 January. We agree with Dr. Blix that Security Council resolutions 687, 1284 and 1441 impose a clear obligation on Iraq to declare its WMD and allow unhindered verification that these have been destroyed and eliminated.

6. Following the last briefing to the Security Council by Dr. El Baradei and Dr. Blix, the majority of the Security Council was of the view that full verification of the Iraqi Declaration would require more active cooperation from Iraq. In this context, Dr. Blix has asked the Iraqi Government to take three steps in the context of his forthcoming visit to Baghdad: one allow free and unrestricted aerial surveillance including manned and unmanned reconnaissance vehicles; two, agree to private interviews of Iraqi scientists without the presence of minders; and three, adopt legislation prohibiting the acquisition and local production of WMD. Iraq should move swiftly toward meeting these requirements and respond to the specific concerns on substantive issues raised by Dr. Blix and Dr. El-Baradei.

Mr. President,

7. Resolution 1441 envisages that the UNMOVIC and IAEA will submit reports to the Council on Iraq's cooperation. The briefings by Dr. Blix and Dr. Baradei to the Council on 27 January were not meant to be conclusive. We believe that we should await their conclusions – positive or negative. Under 1441, what the inspectors report is to constitute the essential basis for the judgment which the Security Council is to make regarding Iraqi compliance.

Mr. President,

8. The international community is justified in seeking to bring about the earliest possible compliance by Iraq with the Council's resolutions prescribing the elimination of its weapons of mass destruction. At the same time, as the primary organ responsible for the maintenance of international peace and security, the Security Council must bear in mind other imperatives:

one, ameliorating the suffering and ensuring the welfare of the Iraqi people. They have suffered too much and too long. They should not suffer anymore;

two, preserving the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. Any erosion of Iraq's integrity could have devastating effects for regional and global peace and stability;

three, preserving the political and economic stability of the region, including through the resolution of other outstanding issues and conflicts in the area including the dispute in South Asia over Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. President,

9. In a statement issued this morning in Islamabad, Prime Minister Zafarullah Khan Jamali, stated:

"The Muslims Ummah, from the shores of the Atlantic to the Pacific, is deeply worried that war may break out, and its implications not only for the people of Iraq, but for the future stability and polity of the Islamic countries. At this time the need for inter-civilizational harmony has never been greater."

10. Prime Minister Jamali went on to say:

"A heavy burden has been placed on the international community, particularly on Security Council members and on Iraq to take timely, effective and adequate steps to surmount this challenge to peace and stability."

"To avert a disaster and tragedy for the Iraqi people, Pakistan calls upon President Saddam Hussain to do his utmost, and to put the Iraqi people first. It is imperative that the President weigh all options, to save the people of Iraq from death and destruction on an unprecedented scale."

Mr. President,

11. I would like to conclude by saying that at this critical moment, Pakistan wishes to reaffirm its determination to act, within and outside the Council, on the basis of the principles of the UN Charter:

- the pacific resolution of disputes;

- the full implementation of UN Security Council resolutions;
- promotion of the well-being of peoples; and
- preservation of international peace and stability.

I thank you, Mr. President.