Mr. President,

Everyone acknowledges this is a historic and decisive moment for the Security Council and for international peace and security.

2. The importance of this meeting is evident from your presence here to preside once again over the Security Council's proceedings and from the participation of 9 other distinguished Foreign Ministers.

3. The Pakistan delegation has listened to the latest reports of Mr. Blix and Mr. Baradei. We are grateful to them. These reports indicate some important developments since 27 January and what remains to be done. The Iraqi government has responded positively to the 3 benchmarks on process identified by Dr. Blix i.e. acceptance of aerial surveillance, interviews without minders, and adoption of national legislation. There were also responses on substantive issues e.g. record of destruction of munitions. Of course, as Dr. Blix and Dr. Baradei have made clear, a number of questions and concerns remain outstanding and must be addressed.

4. Mr. Blix continues to see a serious attitude by Iraq towards cooperation on process, with greater cooperation required on substance. Dr. Baradei continues to assess that it is possible to disarm Iraq through inspections.

5. Of course, it is understandable that the patience of some important members of the Security Council is running out. It's been 12 years in which UN inspectors have had the job of seeking out Iraq's WMD capabilities. The intention of 1441 was that this process of discovery and destruction would be accelerated. At the same time, we have also noted the statement urging caution issued by three members of the Council, endorsed by some other members.

6. The call by the Security Council in Resolution 1441 was credible because it was unanimous. Iraq's new cooperation was, in no small measure, due to the credibility of the Council's determination to secure the elimination of Iraq's WMD.

7. The Security Council must maintain this unity of purpose and action. We believe there are 3 elements around which the Council can still unite:

   one, the general preference – even at this last stage – to secure the elimination of Iraq's WMD through peaceful means;

   two, the conviction that to achieve this, in the words of 1441, Iraq will have to offer "immediate, active, unconditional" cooperation i.e. to actually participate in the destruction of its WMD capabilities or to credibly demonstrate to the inspectors of UNMOVIC and IAEA that it has already destroyed them. This would be in Iraq's own interest. We are open to the proposal for strengthening the inspection mechanisms, if this can speed up the process;

   three, the readiness to allow some more time to achieve the peaceful elimination of Iraq's WMD – but consistent with the spirit and sense of resolution 1441. Mr. Blix has said that with Iraq's immediate, active and unconditional cooperation, this time could be relatively short.

8. Obviously, all people of goodwill desire that all possibilities for a peaceful resolution of
this crisis should be exhausted before the Council may decide to bring into play the enforcement process, as indicated in the Security Council resolution 1441 and earlier resolutions. The decision for the use of force cannot be an easy one for anyone. For Pakistan, an Islamic country from the region such a decision is a most difficult one indeed. Pakistan will make every effort to exhaust the possibilities for a peaceful resolution.

Mr. President,

9. In this context, Pakistan attaches the highest importance to the preservation of the unity and territorial integrity of Iraq. We attach great importance to maintaining peace and stability in the entire region.

10. The primary concern of the government and people of Pakistan in this crisis is the well-being and welfare of the people of Iraq. We must make every possible effort to ensure that the suffering of the Iraqi people is not further exacerbated; indeed, our aim must be to bring an end to the suffering of the Iraqi people. We trust and hope that the Iraqi leadership will also put its people first.