

Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations in the Security Council meeting on the situation in Bosnia-Herzegovina (March 3, 2004)

Thank You, Mr. President

I would like this opportunity to convey our condolence to the people and government of Macedonia on the untimely demise of President Trajkovski in a plane crash in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

2. I wish to warmly welcome the presence of His Excellency Adnan Terzic, the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Bosnia and Herzegovina in the Security Council today. Earlier this week, on 1st March, Bosnia-Herzegovina celebrated the 12th anniversary of its independence. President Musharraf and Prime Minister Jamali sent warm messages of congratulations on this occasion to the brotherly government and people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and I once again express the same fraternal sentiments to Prime Minister Terzic today. I assure him of Pakistan's continued and unwavering commitment to his country and his people on their path to peace and prosperity. As a member of this Council, we shall support the request made by Prime Minister Terzic here today to assist to assist Bosnia-Herzegovina achieve the goals he has outlined here today.

3. I also wish to welcome Lord Ashdown, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina to this chamber once again and thank him for his very informative briefing and also thank Under Secretary General Mr. Guehenno for his remarks.

4. Today, twelve years after a tragic war, Bosnia is a more peaceful and stable country - a far cry from the killing fields and ethnic cleansing of the past decade. That is in considerable measure, a testament to the sustained commitment to the international community to Bosnia. But, the credit for the progress made goes in the largest measure to the resilient and resourceful people of Bosnia and Herzegovina and their leadership. They have demonstrated a determination to rebuild a nation which was torn apart by hate, aggression and international intrigue.

5. We appreciate Lord Ashdown's efforts in promoting the rule of law, facilitating the return of refugees, supporting efforts for reconstruction and economic reforms, and overhauling administrative structures and building capacity for production and employment in Bosnia and Herzegovina. These efforts have helped to move Bosnia and Herzegovina further towards the goals of durable peace and national integration.

6. However, Lord Ashdown has conveyed today as yet all is not completely well in Bosnia and Herzegovina; that the restoration of Bosnia's pre-war tapestry of coexistence remains an aspiration, not a reality. He has mentioned the slow pace of reforms which undermines national integration. We know that the success achieved in Brcko has yet to be replicated in Mostar. Lord Ashdown has also spoken of his concerns regarding Bosnia-Herzegovina's economic recovery. Moreover, the peace

process remained under threat from organized crime networks, extreme nationalists and war criminals. It appeared that Mr. Karadzic and Mr. Mladic could not be found in an area much smaller than the Pakistan-Afghanistan border where Osama bin Laden was thought to be hiding.

Mr. President,

7. We note the Prime Minister Terzic's remark that today Bosnia and Herzegovina is "just another European country well on its way through the process of transition". The people of Pakistan enjoy historic links with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina – links which were reinforced by Bosnia and Herzegovina's recent tragic and violent history. We are deeply committed, therefore, to the goals of peace, harmony and prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina and its emergence – in had Ashdown's words—as a "modern European country".

I thank you, Mr. President.