

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the United Nations in the Security Council on the situation in Bosnia and
Herzegovina (11 November, 2004)**

Mr. President,

The people and Government of Pakistan mourn the sad demise of President Yasser Arafat- the noble leader of a noble struggle – an epic struggle against impossible odds for Palestinian self-determination and national liberation. Pakistan has declared three days of national mourning to mark the passing of the man who, more than anyone else, symbolized the just aspirations and the unjust suffering of the Palestinian people. Pakistan is confident that - inspired by the legacy of Yasser Arafat - the aspiration of the Palestinian people will be realized - sooner rather than later - ending foreign military occupation and creating a free, sovereign and viable Palestinian State in Palestine.

2. I wish to express our felicitations on the efficient manner in which you are presiding the Security Council this month – and in the equally skillful way in which Ambassador Emyr Jones-Parry discharged the responsibilities of the British Presidency last month.

3. I would like to welcome the presence of Mr. Mladen Ivanic (*Miladen Ivanich*), the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina and to take this opportunity to once again express our fraternal sentiments towards Bosnia and Herzegovina. I also wish to welcome Lord Paddy Ashdown, the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina once again to this Council and to thank him for his very informative briefing.

4. Pakistan appreciates the considerable progress that has been made by Bosnia-Herzegovina towards the objective of becoming, as Lord Ashdown has stated in his report, “peaceful, viable state on course to European integration.” This is in large measure due to the resilient and resourceful people of Bosnia and Herzegovina, and is also a testament to the sustained commitment of the international community in implementing the Dayton Accords.

5. We also appreciate the efforts of the role played by the Stabilization Force (SFOR), under NATO command, in providing security assistance in Bosnia and Herzegovina followed by the United Nations Protection Force (UNPROFOR) earlier in which Pakistan was proud to have played an active part. We hope that the European-led peacekeeping force (EUFOR) which will take over from SFOR, will complete the stabilization process in Bosnia and Herzegovina at the end of this year.

6. Pakistan appreciates the achievements of the Office of the High Representative for Bosnia and Herzegovina in promoting the rule of law, in strengthening the institutions of justice, in carrying out reforms in the security and intelligence sectors, and instituting fiscal and economic reforms. We also take note of Lord Ashdown’s intention to continue his efforts to assist in improving the operation

and effectiveness of the Bosnia-Herzegovina's governing institutions, in promoting human rights and national reconciliation.

7. We are specially heartened to note that the historic bridge in Mostar- destroyed during the war – has now been rebuilt. Moves are also afoot to rebuild the political and social bridges in this divided city which once epitomized the tragedy that had befallen Bosnia and Herzegovina. Similarly, we are pleased to note that progress is being made by the Srebrenica Commission to address the issues of truth and justice for the 8,000 innocent Bosnian Muslims who were massacred in that town by extremists.

8. In spite of these achievements, several hurdles that stand in the way of national integration - parallel structures and the intransigence of a number of which Lord Ashdown has described as “obscurantist elements in Republika Srpska,” including those who continue to harbor and support known war criminals like Radovan Karadzic (*Karajich*) and Ratko Mladic (*Miladich*). The issues of justice and national reconciliation remain fundamental to Bosnia's future as a peaceful, stable and unified nation-state.

9. Economic development is essential for durable peace. We appreciate the fiscal reforms being carried out by the Office of the High Representative aimed at creating “a single economic space” in Bosnia-Herzegovina. But these reforms need to be supported by sustained foreign assistance and investment. In Bosnia, as elsewhere, political integration is predicated on economic growth and cooperation. We hope that the “pull of Europe” which Bosnia is continuing to experience becomes stronger if it is accompanied by generous economic and reconstruction support from Europe. Pakistan which has ties of fraternity with Bosnia-Herzegovina, will continue to extend the cooperation as agreed during the visit of President Sulejman Tihic of Bosnia Herzegovina to Pakistan in August this year.

11. In conclusion, I wish to recall the historical links that the people of Pakistan enjoy with the people of Bosnia and Herzegovina. We are deeply committed to the goals of peace, harmony and prosperity in Bosnia and Herzegovina and to its emergence as a modern state and a success story for the UN and the international community.

I thank you, Mr. President.