

**STATEMENT BY AMBASSADOR MUNIR AKRAM AT THE**  
**SECURITY COUNCIL MEETING ON AFGHANISTAN**  
**7 December 2006**

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Pakistan delegation I would like to felicitate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for this month. Let me also express our appreciation to Ambassador Bernales of Peru for the successful completion of their Presidency in November.

Mr. President,

The visit of the Security Council Mission to Afghanistan last month was timely. We congratulate Ambassador Oshima for the presentation of a factual and objective report on the findings of the Mission. The overview contained in the Mission's report is similar to the assessment that was presented by the report of the Secretary General in September. It is a euphemism to say that the security environment in Afghanistan is precarious. Certainly, it is dangerous. But we must understand the reasons for this environment comprehensively and honestly.

In the view of Pakistan, the deterioration in the security environment in Afghanistan is the result of three major failures. Firstly, the failure of governance. We have rampant corruption, mis-governance both at the center and in provinces. We have a drugs economy, 60% of the GDP according to Afghanistan's own figures. We have a failure of security sector reform, much publicized, the police as well as national Army.

The second failure is the failure of reconstruction. There has been some development in the Northern parts of Afghanistan but there has been virtually no development in the south and the southeast of Afghanistan, which is largely a terra incognita for the Kabul government. This is where there are large sanctuaries for the militancy, which today threatens Afghanistan and Pakistan. Large tracts of land are out of the control of both the Kabul government as well as the coalition forces. There, the Islamic militants rule certainly by night and often by the day. We must bring

reconstruction if the Afghan people, the people of this region are to have a stake in peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The third failure is the failure of reconciliation. Large sections of the Afghan population particularly the Pashtoons have been left out of the power structure both at the center and in the provinces. Warlords rule and fight against each other and the people have complete insecurity. They therefore turn to any one who can provide that security for them.

Pakistan, Mr. President has a vital stake in peace and stability in Afghanistan. 25 years of war in Afghanistan have destabilized our frontier regions, radicalized our frontier regions and alienated some of the Pashtoons because of what is happening in Afghanistan. Pakistan therefore desires peace and stability in Afghanistan. If we are to serve the larger objective of serving as a bridge between Central Asia, South Asia and West Asia, we need peace in Afghanistan. But above all Pakistan's support for Afghanistan and our cooperation with Afghanistan are dictated by the natural affiliation between our peoples, of history, of faith, of ethnicity and of common suffering during difficult years. We are therefore pained to hear insinuations and allegations such as those, which were expressed today by my distinguished brother from Afghanistan.

The Foreign Minister of Pakistan is today in Kabul discussing ways and means in which we can cooperate and help Afghanistan. But help is based on mutual trust and when we hear our Afghan brothers mouth allegations, which are either untrue or grossly exaggerated, we question the motives. We ask ourselves why do they seek to explain their own failure by pointing fingers across the borders. We wonder whether they are acting on their own behalf or whether they are acting as a puppet of those who desire to erode the relations between the Pakistan and Afghanistan and the brotherly people of the two countries. People speak of Medusas but believe in Kali, the goddess of war. We ask our Afghan brothers to refrain from such exaggerations and allegations if they desire our cooperation.

Mr. President,

The Taliban are an Afghan phenomenon. My brother has quoted from the report of the Secretary General, let me also refer to that

report. The Secretary General's report has rightly noted that the insurgency in Afghanistan is being conducted by, and I quote, "Afghans operating inside Afghanistan's borders". The report also identifies five distinct leadership centers of the insurgency, all located within Afghanistan. According to the report and I quote again, the foot soldiers of the insurgency are Afghans recruited within Afghanistan. We therefore reject insinuations of Pakistan providing sanctuaries or of any training and recruitment in Pakistan, Certainly we would ask our friends such as Denmark to come and check before they repeat such allegations.

Mr. President,

There are of course some elements of Taliban and their sympathizers who crossed over into Pakistan following the post 9/11 military intervention by the United States and coalition forces in Afghanistan and these Taliban and militants from Al-Qaeda melded into the 3 million Afghan refugees who have been hosted for the past 25 years by Pakistan.

Pakistan is helping Afghanistan in the security sector including through the Tri-partite Commission. The United States, ISAF and NATO and even Afghan officials are aware of the nature and the extent of Pakistan's support. Pakistan believes that the Taliban are a common threat to Afghanistan and Pakistan. Their vision is contrary to the vision of modernism, which we are seeking to promote in our country. But the Taliban are Afghans operating in the large areas of Southern and Eastern Afghanistan and these operations could not take place unless the local populations were sympathetic to the Taliban and the militants who operate with impunity in those large tracts of Afghanistan. Pakistan for its part has made every effort to prevent illegal border crossing. We have deployed 80,000 troops, more than the total of the coalition and Afghan forces on the other side. We have lost 600 of our personnel, killed in these 80 operations we have conducted. Therefore, there can be no doubt about the sincerity and the commitment of Pakistan to bring security to the border regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. But this is a joint responsibility. We do not accept that the onus is only on Pakistan. We have 700 posts along the borders with Afghanistan and 80,000 troops, there is a fraction on the other side. In the North Waziristan area itself, we have 97 posts as

compared to 3 for NATO/ISAF and 21 for the Afghan Army. We therefore ask that there should be a matching effort to control the long and difficult borders and we should refrain from allegations against Pakistan and seeking to transfer blame onto Pakistan.

I would add Mr. President that the international community has avoided seriously addressing the problem of the Afghan Refugees. Three million of them are still in Pakistan without any appreciable international assistance. We support them ourselves. They constitute 1/10th of the total population of Afghanistan. Many of the complaints regarding illegal border crossings would end if we could return these refugees to Afghanistan. We have proposed that the Afghan refugee camps on the border should be relocated to the Afghan side and we are planning to return all refugees within three years to Afghanistan. That should put an end to allegations of cross borders movement. But it is surprising that the refugee issue does not figure in the report of the Security Council Mission. We wonder and would ask Ambassador Oshima, whether this was raised by the Kabul side, it was certainly raised with Ambassador Oshmia by the Foreign Secretary of Pakistan whom he consulted in Islamabad. But this issue is totally ignored. We have said that to prevent cross border movement, we want to fence the border at least selectively. It is not accepted by our partners. We have proposed more drastically to mine the borders, but this is opposed on humanitarian ground as we just heard from Canada.

People speak loosely about the agreement we concluded in the North Waziristan agency of our frontier. We did so to calm the area and to prevent cross border action by militants. This was an agreement with the tribal elders and not with the Taliban. And the result is that there is calm in North Waziristan today. This can be independently established and the incidents of violence in Afghanistan have declined since September. This is established by the statistics of NATO and ISAF. The fighting that is taking place currently in Afghanistan is mostly in the Helmand Province which is quite a distance from the border and there too the United Kingdom forces operating did reach a similar agreement with the tribal leaders in the Musa Qila area which has calmed the situation there.

Mr. President,

We intend to convene tribal Jirgas in other parts of our frontier region to conclude peace and development agreements similar to North Waziristan. Jirgas in the tribal areas of Pakistan and across the border in South and East Afghanistan are a local and time-honoured tradition. It is a process to promote consensus and reconciliation by involving credible intermediaries and tribal elders. We believe that such agreements could be replicated on the Afghan side to strengthen the tribal and traditional leadership structures and political alienation, cease hostilities, bring about normalcy and promote reconstruction and development. This approach was endorsed at the Summit Meeting between the Presidents Musharraf, Karazi and President Bush last September in Washington. Foreign Minister Kasuri is visiting Kabul today for further discussion on the modalities of these Jirgas.

Mr. President,

Pakistan will continue to provide its cooperation and support to Afghanistan. But the problems of Afghanistan need to be addressed through a holistic approach based on political reconciliation, improved security and governance and rapid and large-scale economic and social development and reconstruction. Afghanistan on its own cannot achieve these tasks, it needs the support of the international community. Pakistan, despite limited resources and its own problems has committed 250 million dollars for reconstruction in Afghanistan. We have spent over half of that amount and 60000 Pakistanis are in Afghanistan helping in the reconstruction.

Mr. President,

As Ambassador Oshima has appropriately warned in his briefing, it is abundantly clear that Afghanistan needs additional and sustained support and assistance from the international community. Without such support there is no guarantee that Afghanistan will not slide back into conflict and become a failed state once again.

We believe there is need to win the hearts and minds of the people through a political and economic approach. Military means, often necessary, cannot deliver in themselves. It is in this perspective that President Musharraf has proposed the implementation of a

Marshal Plan like programme of 4 to 5 billion dollars in the south and southeast of Afghanistan. This amount is only a fraction of that which is spent on military operations in Afghanistan. The International community should seriously consider this proposal, which under the prevailing circumstances, can provide a realistic chance of bringing durable peace and development to Afghanistan.