

**Statement by Ambassador Munir Akram, Permanent
Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations, during the
Security Council Briefing on United Nations Assistance Mission in
Afghanistan (UNAMA)
(23 June 2022)**

Mr. President,

We take note of the Report of the Secretary-General S/2022/485 and thank Under-Secretary-General, Martin Griffiths, and Deputy Special Representative Alakbarov for their briefings. We've also heard from three Afghans in this Council's debate. They represent, themselves. The Security Council has not invited those who actually control the country and I believe that while calls are being made upon the Taliban, the fact that the Council is not able to hear them, calls into question the credibility of this Council's consideration of the situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

2. We thank the outgoing Special Representative, Ambassador Deborah Lyons, for her constructive role as head of UNAMA and express the expectation that her successor will maintain constructive engagement with the people and de facto government of Afghanistan.

3. Pakistan takes this opportunity to convey its deepest condolences over the loss of precious lives and extensive damage that has been caused by yesterday's devastating earthquake in Afghanistan. We will provide all possible assistance to Afghanistan in this tragic hour and urge the international community to do so as well. This earthquake will further exacerbate an already dire humanitarian situation. While, the worst of the humanitarian scenarios were avoided last winter, due to the characteristic resilience of the Afghan people as well as the excellent work carried out by the UN and its humanitarian agencies, human catastrophe could well happen unless steps are taken to address the underlying causes of Afghanistan's humanitarian and economic crisis. Its consequences would be: massive human suffering, more Afghan refugees, revival of internal conflict, and an intensified threat from terrorist groups, like Daesh.

Mr. President,

4. We are at another inflection point in Afghanistan's recent turbulent history. In our view, we must be clear about our objectives.

5. And we believe that the primary objective must be to achieve peace and stability in Afghanistan.

6. My delegation, in its capacity as Chair of the OIC Foreign Ministers, has circulated a document to the Security Council outlining the pathway to peace and stability in Afghanistan. The OIC Group has:

- called for sustained engagement of the international community with Afghanistan, including provision of all possible recovery, reconstruction, development, financial, educational, technical and material assistance;
- reiterated that Afghanistan's access to its financial resources will be pivotal in preventing a collapse, and called for exploring realistic pathways towards unfreezing Afghanistan's financial assets and legitimate banking services;
- urged the UN Security Council in particular to ensure that existing targeted sanctions do not impede the provision of humanitarian aid or economic resources to Afghanistan;
- reiterated that development, peace, security, stability, and human rights are inter-linked and, underlined the importance of achieving sustainable peace and development in Afghanistan through regional economic and connectivity projects;
- emphasized the importance of establishing inclusive governmental structures;
- reaffirmed the importance of ensuring that the territory of Afghanistan is not used as a platform or safe haven by any terrorist group, organization, or individual;
- recalled the statement issued by the OIC Group in New York on "Afghan Girls' right to education," which called for respecting the right of all Afghans to education;

- reiterated the central role of the OIC Member States, Islamic scholars as well as the Ulema in continuing dialogue, engagement, and exchange of best practices with the Afghan authorities on access to education and women's rights in Islam, including through exchange of respective delegations; and
- called on the international community, in particular the UN Security Council, to support all such engagement efforts, and remove any practical or logistical hindrances towards that end.

Mr. President,

7. We trust that the Security Council and UNAMA would take full account of these elements for normalization and stability in Afghanistan contained in the OIC's Joint Statement. We look forward to working with UNAMA under the new Special Representative and we feel that UNAMA must focus first and foremost on helping to address the economic and financial crisis which is being faced by Afghanistan including continuing to address the impact of the bilateral sanctions as well as working towards the unfreezing of Afghan assets. It is through economic and political engagement Mr. President and we are encouraged that both the Under Secretary General and Deputy Special Representative have advocated this engagement. It is through economic and political engagement that the concerns regarding human rights, including the rights of women and girls; political inclusivity and counter-terrorism are likely to be satisfactorily addressed.

8. Pakistan remains especially concerned about the terrorist attacks emanating from Afghanistan which are attacks against my country, which are sponsored and financed by our adversary. We will find effective ways to end such terrorist attacks against Pakistan and to end the disinformation campaign which one member of the Security Council which is a state sponsor of terrorism has launched against my country.

9. Pakistan supports the efforts within the platform of the six neighbouring countries plus Russia to promote a pathway to peace and economic and political normalization in Afghanistan. We also believe that the Extended Troika of the US, China, Russia and Pakistan can make a contribution to building an agreed pathway to peace and stability in Afghanistan, including on ways and means to effectively address the threat of terrorism within and from Afghanistan.

Mr. President,

10. Despite our mutual frustrations at the lack of progress on certain issues - whether political inclusivity, women rights, or counter-terrorism - international community's engagement with the Afghan authorities has in our view produced tangible progress on other fronts.

11. As compared to the past, there are no civilian casualties as was the count then. The overall political and security situation in Afghanistan has remained relatively stable, and the threat of possible civil war, wide-scale reprisal killings and mass exodus of refugees has been avoided so far. The international community should encourage all efforts that should be made by the Afghans themselves to promote political reconciliation and inclusivity and we welcome some of the steps that have been taken including the formation of a possible Loyal Jirga as such.

Mr. President,

12. We hope we will look at the situation in Afghanistan from a proper historical and geo-political perspective.

Mr. President,

13. We hope that at this critical juncture in the history of Afghanistan, we will make the right choices that would steer the country towards peace and stability and help bring an end to the four decades of suffering and war which have been suffered by the Afghan people.

I thank you Mr. President.