



Security Council

Fifty-sixth year

Provisional

4414th meeting

Tuesday, 13 November 2001, 3.30 p.m.
New York

<i>President:</i>	Miss Durrant	(Jamaica)
<i>Members:</i>	Bangladesh	Mr. Rahman
	China	Mr. Tang Jiaxuan
	Colombia	Mr. Fernández de Soto
	France	Mr. Védrine
	Ireland	Mr. Cowen
	Mali	Mr. Sidibe
	Mauritius	Mr. Gayan
	Norway	Mr. Petersen
	Russian Federation	Mr. Lavrov
	Singapore	Mr. Jayakumar
	Tunisia	Mr. Mejdoub
	Ukraine	Mr. Zlenko
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Straw
	United States of America	Mr. Negroponte

Agenda

The situation in Afghanistan

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Kabul has created a dangerous political vacuum. Unless the United Nations is able to put together a political dispensation which is representative of all segments of the Afghan population, conflict and turmoil will continue to afflict that unfortunate country.

For such an interim political administration to play the expected role for peace, stability and unity, it will be vital for it to move to Kabul, the capital and the symbol of unity of the State. The peace and security of Kabul will have to be secured. A multinational force should be created with the coalition providing back-up support. Fears have been expressed of reprisals and even of ethnic cleansing in parts of Afghanistan. Such a disaster needs to be prevented. Otherwise, hopes of preserving the unity of Afghanistan could suffer a mortal blow.

Pakistan hopes that peace in Afghanistan will be followed by international efforts for rehabilitation and reconstruction in Afghanistan. Only thus can we in Pakistan hope for the refugees to return to their country.

The need for a humanitarian strategy in addition to the military and political strategies is urgent. This requires urgent concerted and coordinated efforts, supported with generous funding, to address the needs of the Afghans, not only in refugee camps but also inside Afghanistan. That will involve the delivery of humanitarian assistance to people in their home localities. It will also involve the setting up of camps inside Afghanistan to provide emergency support and assistance for internally displaced persons.

Except for Afghanistan itself, no country has suffered more than Pakistan as a result of the turmoil in Afghanistan over the last two decades. We have provided asylum to over three million refugees. The economic and social burden on Pakistan was aggravated after 1989, as world assistance for their maintenance dried to a trickle. The refugees entered the labour force, displacing Pakistanis and increasing unemployment in our country. We are not in a position to open our borders to all those who may want to enter Pakistan in search of food and relief. Unfortunately, despite restrictions, over 80,000 new Afghan refugees have crossed into Pakistan in the past two months. Opening the borders will bring a massive influx of refugees into Pakistan — creating a situation that we cannot afford. There are more than 1.5 million internally displaced persons in Afghanistan and around

5 to 7 million vulnerable people. It is therefore essential to provide assistance to the needy Afghans inside their own country. However, we do not have hearts of stone, and Pakistan will continue to allow the vulnerable Afghans and injured civilians, women and children, to be housed in refugee camps close to the border in Pakistan on a temporary basis. Pakistan, for its part, will continue to do whatever it can to alleviate the hardship of the Afghan people.

Once peace returns to Afghanistan, humanitarian relief has to be sustained. No peace process can work without the commensurate support to rebuild and rehabilitate this war-ravaged nation. It is therefore extremely important to evolve concurrently a comprehensive post-conflict reconstruction and rehabilitation plan, which will be put in place as soon as peace returns to Afghanistan. It is imperative for the international community to begin work immediately on this plan and to arrange the necessary finances to support and sustain it. Any reconstruction effort in Afghanistan must, at the minimum, entail the restoration of water management systems, the revival of agriculture, the reconstruction of infrastructure, the rebuilding of institutions and continued humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people. To this end, the President of Pakistan proposed the establishment of an “Afghan Trust Fund” under the auspices of the United Nations to assist in humanitarian relief, as well as in national reconstruction and rehabilitation efforts in Afghanistan.

This time, the international community must not walk away from Afghanistan. It must demonstrate the political will and the determination to engage and help the Afghan people in rebuilding peace and the economy of their country. The world community disappointed the Afghans in the past. The negative consequences of that neglect are clear for everyone to see. We must not repeat that mistake.

Before concluding, I wish to reiterate Pakistan’s commitment to full cooperation with the United Nations and Mr. Brahimi’s efforts to promote peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The President: The next speaker is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Italy. I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Renato Ruggiero; I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Ruggiero (Italy): This meeting of the Security Council is both timely and crucial, a few hours after the fall of Kabul. I listened with great interest to the presentation of Mr. Brahimi following his recent mission to the region. In taking the floor, I will limit my remarks to three main considerations: first, Italy's commitment to the fight against international terrorism; secondly, the urgency of creating under the aegis of the United Nations and, notably, Mr. Brahimi, a political process aimed at establishing in Afghanistan a broad-based, multi-ethnic and balanced administration; thirdly, but equally urgent and important, the need to develop a strategy for humanitarian assistance to the population both inside and outside Afghanistan.

Italy has pledged to the coalition against international terrorism ground troops, naval units and air forces, and the Government's decision has been supported by an unprecedented display of parliamentary consensus: over 90 per cent of the members of the Parliament. The current military actions — fully legitimate under the United Nations Charter and relevant Security Council resolutions — are targeted at bringing to justice the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks and eradicating the Al Qaeda network and those who provide assistance to the terrorists and harbour them. Italy believes that every effort should be made to reduce further suffering of the Afghan civilian population, the victim for years of a humanitarian crisis aggravated by the policies of an undemocratic and isolationist regime, and to limit to the maximum the loss of innocent lives.

Italy fully subscribes to the principle that the future Government of Afghanistan should be representative and express the broad, multi-ethnic composition of Afghan society. As the European Union's presidency stated earlier, we encourage and support Mr. Brahimi in continuing his efforts with the aim of forming a political alternative to the Taliban regime. The democratic future of Afghanistan should remain in Afghan hands. In the present circumstances, it is critical to assure parallel improvements in the rapidly evolving situation in the region and in the progress of the inter-Afghan dialogue. Italy therefore stresses the need to assist the Afghan people in urgently building a comprehensive political solution involving also personalities from among the diaspora — a solution that gives a voice to every

component of Afghan society and contributes to regional peace and stability.

Italy is also assisting the United Nations with its own efforts, as a member of the European Union and as the current presidency of the G-8.

Adequate conditions must be promptly created to prevent a security vacuum, and they should accompany political developments. A proper security framework is an indispensable element for stability and also for the distribution of humanitarian assistance. In fact, we consider that humanitarian efforts should be intensified, particularly for the internally displaced persons. Italy has so far allocated more than \$30 million in response to the appeals of various humanitarian organizations. We have also increased our aid to countries that shelter large numbers of refugees.

Together with the United Nations, we are studying how to better assist reconstruction once peace has returned to the region. We intend to consider as a matter of priority projects that can be quickly implemented to benefit the local population, particularly in the agricultural sector, and those projects that promote crop replacement with the aim of eradicating the plague of drugs. The donor community must be mobilized in a clear intervention strategy encompassing the transition from the emergency phase to reconstruction and rehabilitation.

Italy stands ready to consider offering additional resources needed to allow a better future for the people of Afghanistan, who have been crushed by years of civil strife. A coordinated effort is essential, since there can be no lasting peace without creating the conditions for a sustainable and peaceful development.

The President: The next speaker inscribed on my list is the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran. I extend a warm welcome to His Excellency Mr. Kamal Kharrazi; I invite him to take a seat at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. Kharrazi (Islamic Republic of Iran): The very name of Afghanistan is reminiscent of vivid images of seemingly endless war, carnage, repression, displacement, destruction, poverty and despair. Afghanistan was long left to itself to struggle with its numerous problems. Time and again, our warnings that the situation in Afghanistan, and in particular the policies of the Taliban, pose serious threats to international peace and security were either taken