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PROVIS IONAL

S/PV.2853
17 April 1989

ENGLISH

PROVIS IONAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE TWO THOUSAND
EIGHT HUNDRED AND FIFTY-THIRD MEETING

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Monday, 17 April 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. BEIDNOGOV

(Union of Soviet Socialist
Republics)

Members: Algeria
Brazil
Canada
China
Colombia
Ethiopia
Finland
France
Malaysia
Nepal
Senegal
United Kingdom of Great Britain and
Northern Ireland
United States of America
Yugoslavia

Mr. DJOUDI
Mr. ALENCAR
Mr. FORTIER
Mr. YU Mengjia
Mr. PEÑALOSA
Mr. TADESSE
Mr. TORNUDD
Mr. BLANC
Mr. RAZALI
Mr. RANA
Mrs. DIALLO

Sir Crispin TICKELL
Mr. PICKERING
Mr. PEJIC

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The meeting was called to order at 11.00 a.m.

ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA

The agenda was adopted.

THE SITUATION RELATING TO AFGHANISTAN

LETTER DATED 3 APRIL 1989 FROM THE CHARGE D'AFFAIRES OF THE PERMANENT MISSION OF AFGHANISTAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS ADDRESSED TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL (S/20561)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): In accordance with the decisions taken at the 2852nd meeting, I invite the representative of Afghanistan to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representative of Pakistan to take a place at the Council table; I invite the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to take the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Roshan-Rawaan (Afghanistan) and Mr. Shah Nawaz (Pakistan) took places at the Council table; Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic) took the place reserved for him at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should like to inform the Council that I have received letters from the representatives of Cuba, Democratic Yemen, the German Democratic Republic, Japan, Mongolia, Saudi Arabia and Turkey in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In accordance with the usual practice, I propose, with the Council's consent, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in conformity with the relevant provisions of the Charter and rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Oramas Oliva (Cuba), Mr. Al-Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Zachmann (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Kagami (Japan), Mr. Dugersuren (Mongolia), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia) and Mr. Aksin (Turkey) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I should like further to inform the Council that I have received a letter dated 11 April 1989 from the Permanent Representative of Saudi Arabia to the United Nations, which reads as follows:

"I have the pleasure, in my capacity as Chairman of the Islamic Group, to request that the Security Council, in accordance with rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure, extend an invitation to His Excellency Mr. A. Engin Ansay, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, in the course of the Council's consideration of the item entitled, 'The situation relating to Afghanistan'."

That letter has been circulated as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/20587. Unless I hear any objection, I shall take it that the Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. A. Engin Ansay.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on the agenda.

The first speaker is Mr. A. Engin Ansay, Permanent Observer of the Organization of the Islamic Conference to the United Nations, to whom the Council has extended an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure.

I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ANSAY: Mr. President, on behalf of the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), Mr. Hamid Algabid, and on my own behalf, I should like to thank you for giving me the opportunity to address the Council on an issue of such extreme importance to our organization.

I should also like to avail myself of this opportunity to congratulate you on your assumption of the high office of President of the Security Council for the month of April. I do believe that your well-known diplomatic skills and professional merits will enable you successfully to conduct this month's proceedings of the Council.

May I also pay a well-deserved tribute to your predecessor, Her Excellency Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal, for the skill and ability with which she conducted the work of the Council during the past month.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference was among the first to condemn the foreign invasion of Afghanistan. The first extraordinary session of the Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, which was held at Islamabad from 27 to 29 January 1980, was devoted to the question of Afghanistan. That Conference condemned the foreign military aggression and demanded the immediate and unconditional withdrawal of all foreign troops from Afghanistan; suspended the membership of Afghanistan in the Organization of the Islamic Conference; invited the member States of the OIC to withhold recognition of the illegal régime in Afghanistan and recommended to all member States to affirm their solidarity with the Afghan people in its just struggle to safeguard its faith, national independence and territorial integrity and to recover its right to determine its destiny.

The Eleventh Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers, held at Islamabad from 17 to 22 May 1980, in its resolution 19/11-P, established an Ad Hoc Committee comprising the Secretary-General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and

(Mr. Ansay)

the Foreign Ministers of Pakistan and Iran to find a political solution to the problem of Afghanistan. Later, Tunisia and Guinea were also added to the membership of the Ad Hoc Committee. The Ad Hoc Committee held its first meeting at Teheran from 4 to 6 June 1980 and its second meeting at Mont Pelerin, Switzerland, attended also by the representatives of the Afghan Mujahidin. The Ad Hoc Committee held many more meetings on several occasions to promote a political solution for the problem of Afghanistan, including meetings held at New York during sessions of the United Nations General Assembly to evaluate the situation in Afghanistan and co-ordinate the action to be taken by the General Assembly. It is indeed worthwhile mentioning, in this context, that the representatives of the Afghan Mujahidin were invited to participate in the third, fourth and fifth Islamic summit conferences, as well as in all of the Islamic Conferences of Foreign Ministers that have been held since.

At the same time the Organization of the Islamic Conference fully supported the ongoing efforts of the United Nations, especially those of the Secretary-General and his personal representative, to achieve a political settlement of the Afghan crisis.

During the past 10 years Afghanistan, an independent Muslim and non-aligned OIC member country, was subjected to one of the most brutal and devastating of wars. Throughout that time invaders tried to impose an illegal régime against the will of the people of Afghanistan.

Many aspects of the war in Afghanistan remain hidden from us, but what is obvious and clear is the ugly face of that war, with all its killings and destruction. The number of those who were killed and of those who had to flee their homes and their country is enormous. More than 1.5 million Afghans were killed; more than 5 million sought refuge in neighbouring countries - almost a third of the total population of Afghanistan; more than 3 million were displaced

(Mr. Ansay)

inside the country and 10,000 villages and cities were destroyed and devastated. For the past nine years, instead of seeds, only mines were planted in the soil of Afghanistan.

The past year has finally seen the glorious victory of our Afghan brethren in their valiant struggle to rid their country of foreign occupation. The courage, fortitude and perseverance with which they waged their jihad have been crowned with success. Bowing to the irresistible pressure of the Mujahidin, the foreign troops that occupied their homeland and sought to impose upon them an alien ideology have withdrawn to their own country, and the illegal régime installed by them does not at all enjoy the support of the people.

The entire Islamic world and the OIC rejoice at the triumph of the Afghan people and salute them on their historic victory. They have added a glorious new chapter to the history of Islam. They shrank from no sacrifice, however great, in their resolute struggle for the restoration of their freedom and independence and, in the end, they emerged successful against overwhelming odds.

The heroic jihad of the valiant people of Afghanistan against those invaders and against the subsequent imposed régime is an example of the determination of the Afghan people to defend their true Islamic identity and traditional way of life, their independence and their territorial integrity.

The determination of the Afghan Mujahidin and the firm support shown for them by the international community and by the Islamic Umma led to the signing of the Geneva accords in April 1988. In that context our gratitude and appreciation are also due His Excellency the Secretary-General of the United Nations and his personal representative for the successful conclusion of the accords reached in Geneva.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference was prompt to hail this brilliant victory of the Mujahidin and the Afghan people when the departure of the last

(Mr. Ansay)

contingents of the occupying army was announced on 15 February 1989. While we have every reason to be satisfied at the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from Afghanistan, the ordeal of the people of Afghanistan is not over yet. The peace they yearn for is yet to be achieved. Thus, they continue in their struggle to eliminate the last vestiges of foreign occupation, and their will to regain their right to self-determination remains firm until power is transferred to a broad-based representative government.

We believe that the transfer of power in Afghanistan to a broad-based interim government acceptable to the Afghan people is a sine qua non for the restoration of peace in Afghanistan and the creation of conditions conducive to the voluntary return of the Afghan refugees and the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Afghanistan, free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever. Therefore, the present régime must give way to a government that embodies the deep aspirations of the Afghan people as expressed throughout the long struggle for the liberation of their country. Only then can peace prevail in Afghanistan.

It is a matter of satisfaction for the Organization of the Islamic Conference to note that the Islamic Unity of the Afghan Mujahidin convened a Consultative Shura during the month of February 1989, leading to the establishment of an interim Government. Following that extremely important development the Eighteenth Islamic Conference of Foreign Ministers held at Riyadh, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, from 13 to 16 March 1989 was a historic event as far as the people of Afghanistan are concerned. That Conference, inter alia, commended the historic struggle of the Afghan people for the restoration of its identity as an independent, non-aligned and Islamic country and expressed appreciation for the role played by the Alliance of the Afghan Mujahidin in achieving the targets of the jihad waged by the Afghan people. It commended the consequent formation of a Consultative Shura representing

(Mr. Ansay)

the Afghan people and the establishment of an interim Government. It welcomed the conclusion of the Geneva Agreement of 14 April 1988, under the auspices of the United Nations, which constitutes an important step towards achieving a comprehensive political solution for the Afghan problem. It commended the completion of the withdrawal of Soviet forces from Afghanistan in accordance with the Geneva Agreement, an essential step for the restoration of peace and stability in Afghanistan and the entire region. It invited the representatives of the Afghan Mujahidin to occupy the vacant seat of Afghanistan in the Organization of the Islamic Conference that had been suspended since 1980.

That determined decision by the OIC reiterates once again my Organization's appreciation of the heroic struggle of the valiant Afghan Mujahidin against outside invaders and against the unrepresentative and illegal régime imposed upon them.

With regard to this current series of meetings of the Council and the unfounded claim of the Kabul régime, my delegation would only like to point out the fact that the eloquent statement by the chairman of the delegation of Pakistan adequately answered all questions that have been raised. There is no doubt whatsoever in our minds about the utmost sincerity of the Government and the people of Pakistan, who have suffered and sacrificed so much since the advent of this problem in their profound desire to see that matters return to normal in Afghanistan. Since the successful conclusion of the Geneva accords and Pakistan's full compliance with that agreement, the people of Afghanistan have in their traditional and democratic manner, expressed their self-determination by convening their Consultative Shura and establishing their interim Government.

As I mentioned earlier, the OIC has already stated its position in no uncertain terms by offering the vacant seat of Afghanistan to its rightful owners. We would like to invite the entire membership of other international intergovernmental organizations to follow suit.

(Mr. Ansay)

In our view, the various aspects of the problem that remain to be solved should be tackled by the Afghans themselves, since it surely is an internal matter of that country, and especially so after the withdrawal of the foreign troops, and any futile attempt to internationalize the question by bringing it before this Council will only prolong its resolution.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank Mr. Ansay for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Saudi Arabia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. SHIHABI (Saudi Arabia) (interpretation from Arabic): It gives me great pleasure to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month and to wish you success.

I should also like to mention, with great appreciation, your predecessor in the presidency of the Council for last month, Madame Absa Claude Diallo, the Permanent Representative of Senegal, who earned the thanks and admiration of all of us.

Today's meeting of the Council is a case in which both the plaintiff and the substance of the complaint lack legitimacy and in which competence does not rest with the body to which the complaint is being made. The plaintiff, the régime in Kabul, lost the elements of any legitimacy of authority when it was reduced to being a guard for some of the main cities in the country ruled as citadels protected by sheer force of arms, rejected by the people from whom it came. At its recent ministerial meeting in Riyadh, the Conference of Foreign Ministers of the Islamic States - the States to whose peoples the Afghan people belong, in their creed, in their aspirations, in their sentiments and in their interests - declared

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

an effective end to all international legitimacy attributed to that régime when it recognized as the seat of authority in Afghanistan the interim Government that emanated from the Shura Council of the Afghan people - the Council whose legitimacy was recognized by friends and adversaries alike. The Conference of Islamic Foreign Ministers, in its decision on Afghanistan, commended the struggle of the Afghan people for the restoration of their identity as an independent Islamic country, expressed appreciation for the role played by the Alliance of Afghan Mujahidin in achieving the targets of the jihad and the consequent formation of the Consultative Shura Council, as well as the establishment of an interim Government. It invited the representatives of the Afghan Mujahidin to occupy Afghanistan's place in the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), welcomed the conclusion of the Geneva Agreements and commended the completion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops. The Islamic Ummah at that Conference pronounced itself.

On the substance of the complaint, the problem of Afghanistan has today become a purely internal problem. It is a problem between the isolated régime in Kabul, which still refuses to depart, and the people of Afghanistan, who have rejected it, just as they opposed the attempts to impose that régime as a ruler against their will. The present complaint, the accusation of another party in order to divert attention from the reality of the situation and the attempt to internationalize the problem after it was reduced to size within Afghan borders are but a manoeuvre that, I am confident, will mislead nobody.

In regard to the complaint before the Security Council, we know that an internal struggle between the people and a ruler that has usurped the seat of power in the still of the night does not fall within the competence of the Council according to Articles 34 and 35 (1) of the Charter of the United Nations, to which the complainant has referred.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

Internationalizing the Afghan dispute once again will not save the régime in Kabul from its destiny, and it would be wiser for it to think of a better way to deal with its situation, now that the people of Afghanistan, at the recent meeting of their Shura Council, have decided the matter and planned for their future.

We mention with appreciation the courageous decision taken by the Soviet Union to withdraw from Afghanistan and its strict compliance with that decision to complete its withdrawal by the middle of last February, in recognition of the political, military, international and, above all, logical realities of the situation. In our view, to support an isolated régime in Kabul that will, sooner or later, have to go would serve only to create a climate of crisis in the region - and the region is in no need of that.

We call upon all States that still support the Kabul régime to take another courageous decision that will put an end to this final obstacle in the path of the stability of Afghanistan. We call upon them to help the Afghan people in its long and arduous journey to repair the devastation of a nine-year war that brought havoc to every home, hurt every family and, in one way or another, affected every individual Afghan and to help them start a new stage, based on good-neighbourliness.

At the previous meeting the Chairman of the Pakistani delegation eloquently exposed those unfounded claims and explained the extent to which Pakistan has fully complied with the Geneva accords. He has thus spared me the effort of going into detail. No State has suffered more than Pakistan from the crisis of the invasion of Afghanistan and its consequences. The people of Pakistan, in spite of their difficult economic conditions, have lived up to the duty of good-neighbourly generosity towards a brotherly people that has suffered foreign invasion. They will surely be happy to see matters return to normalcy and legitimacy.

(Mr. Shihabi, Saudi Arabia)

I should reiterate here that we in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, under the leadership of the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King Fahd bin Abdul Aziz, are following with close attention the evolution of events in Afghanistan on the path to stability and security, and with great concern for security for the people of Afghanistan from all obstacles that stand in the way of the achievement of their full rights, internally and internationally.

Recognition of the right of the people of Afghanistan to persist in their determination to stand on their own feet, liberated and free from a rejected isolated régime, is the logical conclusion to the development of events there. The attempt to distort the picture by trying to internationalize the dispute will serve nobody. It would be better for this exercise to come to a halt and for there to be added to the climate of world détente a new milestone by ending a tragedy which the régime in Kabul is trying to intensify, to God's displeasure.

As we speak today of Afghanistan and its people, we recall Afghanistan and its jihad, during this Holy Month of fasting, the month of Ramadan, and in so doing ask for blessings on the souls of the martyrs of the Afghan Jihad who, with their struggle and their blood, have for the coming generations marked the path for survival.

We salute the Afghan Islamic State, its interim government and the Afghan people for their jihad, hoping that they will be able to make progress without hindrance and to build and march forward as a strong nation capable, God willing, of overcoming all impediments.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Saudi Arabia for his kind words to me.

Mr. RAZALI (Malaysia): I should like to express my delegation's congratulations on your assumption, Sir, of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. Your diplomatic skills and wisdom, as well as the respect all of us have for your country's role and contribution internationally, will ensure a successful conclusion of the Council's deliberations. I wish also to place on record my delegation's deep appreciation of Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, Permanent Representative of Senegal, for her very able stewardship of the Council for the month of March.

The representative of Pakistan has dealt at great length on the actual situation in Afghanistan. I commend the Council to ponder and deliberate well on the points made. It would be folly for the Council - zealous or over-zealous in its duties - to lose sight of the true over-all situation. It would be a grave mistake if the Council, in a frantic effort to phase in peace quickly, were to end up buttressing the desperate efforts of a régime that evolved not from the people's choice but was a partner in and party to the introduction into Afghanistan of an alien concept and foreign troops that destabilized and uprooted the mores, heritage and body politic of Afghanistan.

The United Nations has done honourably well in defusing the situation in Afghanistan. The Geneva Agreement of April 1988 is an example of the pragmatic, painstaking work done by the United Nations. The result has been the withdrawal of foreign troops from Afghanistan - a momentous decision hailed by all, even if the decision to withdraw came only after the loss of thousands of lives, the displacement of millions of refugees and the disapprobation of the international community.

It is not realistic to expect that withdrawal should ipso facto mean peace and reconstruction. At least for Afghanistan, it cannot automatically apply. The mistake perpetrated over 10 years ago, backed by a foreign army, to transform

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

Afghanistan, uprooting its traditional and religious foundations, does not just disappear upon withdrawal. A régime founded by foreign choice still clings to power. It is beleaguered; it is walled in. A hostile countryside, made up of true Afghan nationalists who have never wavered in their faith and their determination to defend their traditions and their way of life, despite the mightiest of weapons and the enticement of a foreign ideology, challenges this régime in Kabul on all fronts. Can the United Nations or this Council afford to ignore the true situation - the Mujahidin whose strength is escalating with the increasing collective and popular support and who have driven out foreign troops and now attempt on a broad basis to restore to Afghanistan its independence and established way of life? How does one account for the millions of refugees outside the country, victims of destabilization and foreign presence, who have consistently rejected the various and constantly changing leadership in Kabul since foreign intervention?

The establishment of an Afghan interim government in February 1989 by the Afghan Consultative Shura, which represented a broad segment of the Afghan people, is an important step towards the realization of the rights of the Afghan people to self-determination. The interim government has made provisions for cabinet posts to be filled by individual representatives from Kabul. Indeed, the interim government constitutes an important step towards the achievement of a comprehensive political settlement of the Afghan problem. The assumption of the interim government to the seat of Afghanistan at the Organization of the Islamic Conference further consolidates the international entity of the interim government.

The path towards peace and reconciliation for Afghanistan lies clearly through the assumption of the rightful role of the interim government in Afghan national affairs. Allegations by the Kabul régime of foreign interference and intervention do not serve to advance the cause of the Afghan people.

(Mr. Razali, Malaysia)

Other demands made by the representative of Kabul as heard by the Council do not answer the vital needs of the situation. There is already in place a mechanism established under the Geneva accords, the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNMOGAP), which has repeatedly been called upon to investigate allegations of violations of the Geneva provisions. It is important to remember that in considering such requests the United Nations is not made to assume unrealistic responsibilities in the context of the prevailing situation of civil strife in Afghanistan.

The United Nations must build on the realistic achievements of Geneva last year. It needs to do this by relating objectively to the real situation at hand. To be party to pointing the finger at so-called acts of interference is to misplace its responsibilities. The United Nations, like the international community, must respect the struggle that is now being waged by the Mujahidin to right the wrong perpetrated on Afghanistan 10 years ago. The régime in Kabul has no other choice but to accept the inexorable struggle of the people that has now besieged it and make way for a truly representative leadership and Government in Afghanistan.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Malaysia for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-MASRI (Syrian Arab Republic) (interpretation from Arabic): On behalf of my delegation and on my own behalf I should like to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. Your country, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, maintains strong ties of friendship and co-operation with my country, Syria. I am confident that your wisdom and expertise guarantee the achievement of great success in the work of the Council this month.

I take this opportunity to express to the Ambassador of Senegal, Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, our appreciation for the way in which she conducted the work of the Council in March and her tireless efforts to bring it to a successful conclusion.

My country, which maintains strong historic ties with fraternal Afghanistan and Pakistan, welcomed the Geneva accords concluded by the parties concerned last year. Those accords have been the source of universal satisfaction as a decisive factor in the ending of differences among brothers. General Assembly resolution 43/20 of 3 November 1988, which was adopted by consensus, was another landmark on the path towards peace and harmony in the region. The Syrian Arab Republic looks forward to peace prevailing among brothers and believes strict observance of the Geneva accords and their implementation by all parties concerned is the right and true path to the solution of the problem. We hope that after completion of the withdrawal of Soviet troops in keeping with the Agreements, those Agreements will be respected to enable fraternal Afghanistan to form a comprehensive national government with the participation of all factions and parties so that that

(Mr. Al-Masri, Syrian Arab Republic)

non-aligned country can enjoy security, stability, friendship and good-neighbourly relations with all its neighbours.

On this occasion we would express our country's pride in the traditional fraternal relations that link the Syrian and Pakistani peoples and our hope that under the rule of Ms. Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, these relations will be enhanced and strengthened.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the Syrian Arab Republic for the kind words he addressed to me and to my country, the Soviet Union.

The next speaker is the representative of the German Democratic Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ZACHMANN (German Democratic Republic): Allow me first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency for the month of April. We are particularly glad to see in that high office the representative of a country with which the German Democratic Republic maintains close fraternal relations. We are certain that under your presidency the questions the Security Council has to deal with will be solved in a satisfactory way.

At the same time my delegation wishes to express its appreciation to the Ambassador of Senegal, Her Excellency Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, who presided over the work of the Security Council in the month of March.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic is speaking before the Security Council on this agenda item out of concern at the situation existing in and around Afghanistan. As a member of the international community, it feels it has a responsibility to contribute to an end to the bloodshed in Afghanistan and to the restoration of peace and stability in that country and in the entire region. We state our views out of solidarity with the sorely tried Afghan people and out of our conviction that the United Nations, after having played such an important role

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

in bringing about the Geneva accords, can play an even weightier part in their implementation.

As was the case the world over, the German Democratic Republic welcomed the Geneva accords on a political settlement of the situation around Afghanistan. The signing of those accords created the conditions under international law for the elimination of one of the most complex regional conflicts of our time. Upon their signing, the overwhelming majority of States emphatically demanded that all sides involved in the conflict fully implement and respect the provisions of the accords. That demand was also expressed in resolution 43/20, which was adopted by consensus at the forty-third session of the General Assembly. The German Democratic Republic wishes here to commend the strict implementation of the accords by the USSR and Afghanistan, which is reflected above all in the withdrawal of the limited Soviet military contingent that began on 15 May 1988 and ended, as planned, on 15 February last.

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

There is a chance to remove the conflict, to restore peace in the country on the basis of national reconciliation and to stabilize security in the region, if the other sides to the Agreements also fulfil their duties flowing from those Agreements. However, we cannot but note that - as is confirmed by the remarks of the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan - this has not yet happened.

But one thing should have become obvious since Geneva from the developments in and around Afghanistan: interference, the use of force, military assistance to the opposition, the establishment of a so-called interim Government - which does not represent all the opposition forces, let alone the majority of the Afghan people, and even operates from foreign territory - are not at all in the interests of the Afghan people and of peace in and around Afghanistan. Those forces that openly set themselves the goal of removing the legitimate Government of Afghanistan are responsible for what is happening today. We therefore wish to stress again: non-compliance with the Geneva Agreements and resolution 43/20 means undermining the sovereignty of the Republic of Afghanistan and increasing the dangers to peace and security in the region.

The delegation of the German Democratic Republic believes that there is no reasonable alternative to a comprehensive solution of the situation in and around Afghanistan. It considers the cessation of the armed confrontation, stirred up from outside, and the achievement of a cease-fire to be important prerequisites for ending the bloodshed.

At the session of the Foreign Ministers of the States parties to the Warsaw Treaty held in the capital of my country on 11 and 12 April 1989, the Ministers reaffirmed the determination of their States to participate actively in the search for political solutions to the regional conflicts in the Middle East, in Asia, in

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

Africa and in Central America, with due regard for the legitimate interests of the sides and respect for the right of all peoples to determine their own destinies.

In respect to Afghanistan the communiqué of the Berlin session says:

"The Ministers pronounced themselves in favour of an independent, non-aligned and democratic Afghanistan, of guaranteeing its free development on the basis of the policy of national reconciliation without any kind of external interference. They stressed that further efforts are needed to bring about a settlement of the Afghanistan problem".

If the problem of Afghanistan cannot be solved in a peaceful way, that hotbed of conflict may remain a danger to peace and stability in the region for an undetermined period. We are therefore in favour of a resolute commitment by the United Nations to ensure the implementation of the Geneva Agreements. We believe that the more effective carrying out of the mandate entrusted to the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) under the Geneva Agreements will be an important contribution to increasing the peace-making role of the Organization. A first appropriate step in that direction would be the setting up of UNGOMAP observer posts at the Afghan border, as proposed by the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan in his letter of 3 April 1989 to the President of the Security Council. The German Democratic Republic also supports the proposal by the Government of Afghanistan that an international conference be convened under the auspices of the United Nations to discuss questions related to the neutrality and demilitarization of Afghanistan.

My delegation welcomes the statement of 14 April 1989 by the Secretary-General in which he reiterated his

(Mr. Zachmann, German
Democratic Republic)

"commitment to continue to provide all assistance required by the Afghan people for the early realization of a comprehensive, political solution in Afghanistan, as called for by General Assembly resolution 43/20".

Just as the Geneva Agreements are another confirmation of the fact that even complex international issues can be solved by political means if the legitimate interests of all sides involved are taken due account of and if there is a reasonable measure of readiness for compromise, the German Democratic Republic expects political will to prevail when it comes to the implementation of those Agreements.

My Government and the people of the German Democratic Republic support all measures capable of ensuring for the Afghan people a life of peace and harmony in an independent, neutral and non-aligned Afghanistan. The proposals submitted by the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan in his statement of 11 April 1989 are suited to serving the attainment of that goal.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the German Democratic Republic for the kind words he addressed to the Soviet Union and to me personally.

The next speaker is the representative of Cuba. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. ORAMAS OLIVA (Cuba) (interpretation from Spanish): I should like first of all to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. We are convinced that under your wise and able leadership this body will continue to contribute to the preservation of international peace and security, in accordance with the mandate conferred upon it by the Charter. We pledge our modest co-operation for the attainment of that goal.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

I take this opportunity to express our appreciation for the efficient way in which Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo conducted the Council's proceedings in March.

In Cuba's opinion, this series of Security Council meetings is not only pertinent but necessary, for the present situation in Afghanistan endangers peace and security in a large portion of the Asian continent as well as the implementation of the Geneva Agreements, by which it seemed that an end would be put to a conflict that had already lasted for 10 years.

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

We welcome the decision by the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to withdraw its military contingent from Afghanistan in compliance with its commitments, and we salute the willingness of the Government of Afghanistan to adopt the measures necessary to achieve a negotiated peace. Cuba believes that the peaceful settlement of disputes is one of the most basic purposes of the United Nations. This is one case where it is indispensable that full use be made of all the Organization's moral reserves and energy to ensure not only peace in Afghanistan, but also that country's independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity. We must restore the peace and security longed for by the countries of the region.

But to achieve that goal it is vital that all parties to the Geneva accords comply with their commitments and cease all foreign interference in Afghanistan so the Afghan people can solve its own problems and decide freely on its own future, with a broad-based Government of national reconciliation, as repeatedly proposed by President Najibullah.

There is no doubt that a so-called military solution is not valid for Afghanistan. It had been said that the Kabul Government would be quickly overthrown; yet events have clearly shown that the country's second largest city, Jalalabad, has not been taken.

Consequently, and in view of the escalation of recent months, it is urgent that vigorous measures be adopted to end the conflict. One such measure could be the convening of an international conference on Afghanistan, where outstanding differences could be resolved and arrangements for a just and lasting peace adopted.

At the same time it is increasingly necessary to strengthen the good offices the United Nations has been employing in the country. To that end, we must

(Mr. Oramas Oliva, Cuba)

strengthen the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) and adopt all the measures that would enable it fully to fulfil its mandate.

Cuba has been and remains a fervent champion of the use of peaceful means for the settlement of disputes, and the issue before the Council today is no exception. Therefore, we would not wish to end without making a fresh appeal to all parties to cease all interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan, to respect the principles that should govern peaceful coexistence among States and to take the path of negotiation and dialogue to put an end once and for all to a conflict that defies universal common sense.

We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Javier Perez de Cuellar, for recalling in his 14 April statement on this subject a paragraph of General Assembly resolution 43/20, unanimously adopted on 3 November 1988, which

"Reaffirms the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government and to choose their economic, political and social system free from outside intervention, subversion, coercion or constraint of any kind whatsoever". (General Assembly resolution 43/20, para. 6)

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Cuba for the kind words he addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Mongolia. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. DUGERSUREN (Mongolia) (interpretation from Russian): I wish first to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. We are certain that you will be successful in carrying out the difficult tasks that will face you when disturbing and critical events demand close attention and appropriate action by the Security Council.

I should like to join previous speakers in thanking your predecessor, the Ambassador of Senegal, Mrs. Abda Claude Diallo, for the capable way in which she guided the Council's work in March.

My thanks go also to you, Sir, and the other members of the Council for giving us this opportunity to state briefly my Government's position on the item before the Council. The Government of the Mongolian People's Republic attaches particular importance to this item. It crucially affects the vital interests of a State Member of the United Nations, the Republic of Afghanistan, and the cause of peace and security in Asia.

A year ago the international community welcomed with considerable hope the signing of the Geneva accords which laid down the international legal basis for a comprehensive political settlement of the situation that had arisen around Afghanistan. Members will recall that the accords provided for the withdrawal of the limited contingent of Soviet troops that had been deployed in Afghanistan at the request of the Afghan Government. But the central goal of the Geneva accords was to bring an end to foreign interference, which had been widening and exacerbating internecine strife in Afghanistan, and to ensure that Afghan refugees could freely return to their country.

Through joint active efforts, the Governments of the Republic of Afghanistan and the Soviet Union have, within the timeframe set out in the accords, effected the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan and ensured the conditions necessary for resolving the internal problems of that country on the basis of a

(Mr. Dugersuren, Mongolia)

policy of national reconciliation. They are now taking constructive steps to ensure complete compliance with the Geneva accords.

But the actions of other parties to the Geneva accords, particularly Pakistan, run directly counter to the spirit and letter of those historic documents. Specifically, among all the various articles and paragraphs, we find there to have been violations of a particularly important element of the Geneva accords: the Bilateral Agreement Between the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan on the Principles of Mutual Relations, in particular on Non-Interference and Non-Intervention.

There is much cogent evidence of the constant escalation of those violations, as set out in the statements before the Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan, Mr. Wakil, and other speakers. I shall therefore refrain from going through the facts yet again.

(Mr. Dugersuren, Mongolia)

In that regard, I should just like to stress that, pursuant to the agreement, the parties undertook "to refrain from the promotion, encouragement or support, direct or indirect, of rebellious or secessionist activities against the other High Contracting Party" (S/19835, Annex I, Article II, paragraph 7). However, external forces continue to finance and arm extremist anti-Government groups and are encouraging and organizing bloody armed actions. Those forces make no effort to conceal their attempts to overthrow the legitimate Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, an equal party to the Geneva accords. In light of that, we find particularly illuminating the piecing-together of a so-called "transitional Government" in the territory of Pakistan and the fierce attacks organized from there on Jalalabad and other Afghan towns.

Those actions have aroused the severe condemnation of all peace-loving forces that uphold the interests of the Afghan and Pakistani peoples and respect the principles of justice, including faithful compliance with international obligations. Those actions further contravene the principles of the United Nations Charter, the spirit of our times, when there is growing recognition of the need to ensure the primacy of law in international relations.

My delegation was particularly concerned by the danger of a possible military intervention in Afghanistan, and warning to that effect was issued by the Foreign Minister of Afghanistan here in the Security Council. Once again, this demonstrates that the continuation and, particularly, the further exacerbation of the current situation in Afghanistan threaten the cause of peace and security in the region. We are also alarmed by reports in the media that the implacable rebels are establishing contacts with extremist elements in certain countries in the region and are making attempts to recruit "volunteers".

(Mr. Dugersuren, Mongolia)

The escalation of the current intervention in Afghanistan's affairs after the withdrawal of Soviet troops makes it absolutely clear that that presence was not the reason for the crisis which has arisen in that country. The causes were altogether different.

On the other hand, the course of events has shown that the Government, army and people of Afghanistan are fully determined and capable of defending their freedom, independence and territorial integrity. We are all familiar with the heroic traditions of the Afghan people in its struggle against the colonialists for its freedom, independence and self-determination.

The Mongolian People's Republic whole-heartedly supports the efforts of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, led by President Najibullah, to bring about national reconciliation and to ensure the Afghan people's right to choose its own economic, political and social system without any outside interference whatsoever. Our Government very much appreciates the diplomatic and other actions undertaken by the Soviet Union as the guarantor State in support of a political settlement of the problem. The constructive and realistic compromises undertaken by the Afghan and Soviet sides are a concrete demonstration of their goodwill.

My delegation appeals to the Security Council to take urgent measures to ensure full compliance with the Geneva accords.

The Security Council has called upon all parties and guarantor States of the Geneva accords to do everything in their power to call an immediate halt to outside intervention in Afghanistan's affairs, to bring about a cease-fire and to create the conditions for an intra-Afghan dialogue aimed at forming a broad-based Government.

In the present circumstances, the swift deployment of the necessary number of United Nations observer posts along the Afghan-Pakistan border is extremely urgent.

(Mr. Dugersuren, Mongolia)

My delegation supports the proposal to convene an international conference on the normalization of the situation in Afghanistan, under the aegis of the United Nations and on the basis of the Geneva accords.

In conclusion, we express the hope that the Security Council, aware of its great responsibility for the maintenance of international peace and security, will, in the true interests of the Afghan people and of peace and security in the area, take concrete decisions that will contribute to an effective end to intervention in Afghanistan's internal affairs.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Mongolia for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker inscribed on my list is the representative of Turkey. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AKS IN (Turkey): At the outset, Sir, I wish to extend to you my congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Council for the month of April and my best wishes for success. We are pleased to see as President of the Security Council the representative of the Soviet Union, a neighbouring country with which Turkey has very good relations. We are confident that the Security Council will benefit from your diplomatic skill and experience in dealing with sensitive international questions.

I wish equally to pay a tribute to Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal for having led the Council in March with ability and distinction.

This debate takes place exactly one year after the Geneva Agreements were concluded. There is no doubt that the conclusion of those accords constituted an important step towards the political situation of the Afghanistan problem. Through them the international community has witnessed the withdrawal of foreign troops and welcomed the opportunity given to the Afghan people freely to determine its own future. Today, the need for a broad-based Government, fully representative of the

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

Afghan people, stands out as an essential element for a lasting solution of this problem. We consider the interim Government established by the Consultative Shura last February as a positive step in the right direction. In that respect, I should also like to recall that the Islamic Conference expressed its support of this development during its recent meeting in Riyadh.

The magnitude of the human suffering experienced by the Afghan people is well known. The loss of life and the material destruction have been staggering. There has also been an enormous displacement of population. In his comprehensive statement in the Security Council last Tuesday the representative of Pakistan gave a dramatic account of the situation prevailing in the country. Unfortunately, it has thus far not been possible to carry out effective international action to alleviate the economic hardships and the human suffering described in the various reports of the United Nations Co-ordinator for Humanitarian and Economic Assistance Programmes.

(Mr. Aksin, Turkey)

At present Pakistan and Iran continue to bear the heavy burden of providing shelter for about five million Afghan refugees who have been driven from their homes. We are keenly aware of the tremendous sacrifices undertaken by Pakistan in accommodating millions of destitute victims of a cruel war.

Turkey has deep-rooted ties of friendship with the Afghan nation. We fervently hope that the Afghan people will begin to tend their wounds as soon as possible. However, it would be unrealistic to expect the resolution of the current humanitarian and development problems under the conditions prevailing in Afghanistan. It is clear that the repatriation and rehabilitation of the refugees, as well as the overcoming of the vast economic disruption, are dependent on a political solution that is in full conformity with the aspirations of all segments of the Afghan nation.

The Geneva Agreements and General Assembly resolutions constitute a sound basis on which to build a political settlement of the Afghanistan problem. Turkey is convinced that after 10 years of heavy sacrifices the Afghan people have a right to live in peace under a Government of their choosing so that they can resume their normal activities and rebuild their country. The international community has a duty to assist in making this goal possible.

Turkey has a long tradition of co-operation with Afghanistan going back to the early part of this century, and, in this spirit, it will be glad to do its part towards healing the wounds of that proud nation.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Turkey for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Japan. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. KAGAMI (Japan): I wish to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. I am confident that with the benefit of your guidance and diplomatic skill the work of the Council will be fruitful. I would also like to express my appreciation for the exemplary manner in which your predecessor, Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal, conducted the Council's work during the month of March.

On 14 April we observed the first anniversary of the signing of the Geneva accords. Japan wishes to take this opportunity to reiterate its high appreciation for the efforts of the Secretary-General and the historic importance of the accords and to commend once again the efforts of the parties concerned that led to the successful conclusion of difficult negotiations. Recently, the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) witnessed the complete withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan in accordance with the Geneva accords, which is of crucial importance to the just and comprehensive settlement of the problem.

During the discussions held in the Security Council last Tuesday and again today we have heard allegations of violations of the Geneva accords. Japan would be gravely concerned if such violations were actually being committed and urges all the parties concerned to observe and fulfil their obligations under the accords. However, if the issue under consideration is, in fact, violations of the Geneva accords, we cannot but question the appropriateness of discussing it here today. First, as is clear to everyone, the Geneva accords provide a mechanism for settling disputes. We understand that, having received complaints from both sides, UNGOMAP is duly conducting its detailed investigations. It is therefore important that we carefully refrain from having discussions that could affect the impartiality of UNGOMAP's own investigations - and the integrity of the Geneva accords, for that matter. The Government of Japan looks forward to a report that UNGOMAP will submit

(Mr. Kagami, Japan)

in due course to the Secretary-General and the parties concerned so that it may help bring an early settlement of the problem.

The ultimate objective of the Geneva accords was to attain self-determination by the Afghan people without outside interference so that they may live in lasting peace under a truly representative government. Therefore, if lasting peace is to be restored in Afghanistan it is essential that a broad-based government that truly represents the people of Afghanistan should be established and take over ruling the country. Japan reiterates its appeal to States and relevant international organizations to intensify their efforts in their respective capacities for the achievement of such a goal.

Until peace and unity are restored in Afghanistan the suffering of the Afghan refugees will continue. The Government of Japan sincerely hopes that the voluntary repatriation of refugees will be realized before long. In this respect I would like to take this opportunity to reaffirm the intention of the Government of Japan to continue its positive assistance, through the United Nations and other international organizations, for the voluntary repatriation of refugees, in consultation with the countries concerned. I also wish to express our sincere appreciation for the enormous sacrifice and assistance that the Government of Pakistan has rendered in the cause of self-determination and the welfare of the Afghan people.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Japan for his kind words addressed to me.

The next speaker is the representative of Democratic Yemen. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. AL-ASHTAL (Democratic Yemen) (interpretation from Arabic): I wish at the outset to congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for this month. I am convinced that, with your well-known

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

experience and courtesy, you will lead the Council's deliberations to a successful conclusion. I should also like to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Her Excellency Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, Permanent Representative of Senegal, who skilfully presided over the Council during the month of March.

The international political climate is undoubtedly affected to varying degrees by regional disputes, by their extent and by how close they come to turning into regional - or, indeed, international - crises. The crisis in Afghanistan, which led to the convening of an emergency special session of the United Nations General Assembly in early 1980, has had direct repercussions on the international political climate, which began to deteriorate very rapidly thereafter. Indeed, the 1980s were characterized by confrontation and tension on more than one front and in more than one region.

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

The beginning of the Afghan crisis caused a clouding of the international climate and a deterioration in international relations. Then came the signing on 14 April 1988 by all parties concerned of the Geneva accords for the settlement of the crisis in Afghanistan, which marked the end of a period of international confrontation and sharp dispute and the beginning of the settlement of Afghanistan's problems. The international community has given the Geneva accords its blessing. The General Assembly welcomed those accords in its resolution of 3 November 1988, the first on Afghanistan to be adopted by consensus.

The General Assembly resolution provided the general framework for the settlement of the situation in and around Afghanistan. In addition to welcoming the Geneva Agreements and calling for their faithful implementation in letter and spirit, the resolution set out the most important elements of the settlement. It stressed the need for a full withdrawal of foreign forces in accordance with the relevant provisions of those accords; reiterated that the preservation of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, political independence and non-aligned character of Afghanistan was essential; reaffirmed the right of the Afghan people to determine their own form of government free from outside intervention, and called for the creation of the necessary conditions of peace that would enable the Afghan refugees to return to their homeland. The resolution further emphasized the need for an intra-Afghan dialogue for the establishment of a broad-based government to ensure the broadest support and immediate participation of all segments of the Afghan people.

What steps were then taken to implement the Geneva accords and the General Assembly resolution? What are the political and military facts on the ground? How can the Security Council participate in the creation of the necessary conditions of peace that would enable the Afghan refugees to return in an atmosphere of national reconciliation - all factions of the Afghan people without exception?

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

No one expected the situation in Afghanistan to be settled by mere agreement among the parties concerned on the elements of such a settlement. The Geneva accords were not the ideal result that would not leave any grounds for continuing military struggle following the withdrawal of foreign forces. The same is true of the General Assembly resolution. How can an atmosphere of peace be established without a cease-fire? How can Afghan refugees return to their homeland unless peace has been established? How can Afghan factions participate in a dialogue, in accordance with the General Assembly resolution, without a cease-fire? This is most important. Acceptance of a cease-fire is the only indication of a certain readiness to accept the status quo as a basis for negotiation among the warring parties. More: acceptance of a cease-fire is the only indication that the military option for the solving of the problem has reached a dead end.

It is no coincidence that the Afghan opposition forces and their allies were the very ones who rejected any mention of a cease-fire in the Geneva accords or in the resolution adopted by the General Assembly. They believed that the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan would provide them with conditions for a quick military success. However, it has become clear that the Afghan opposition miscalculated. It miscalculated the balance of power following the withdrawal of foreign forces. It is regrettable that those supporting the opposition committed the same error and that an opportunity has been lost to find an honourable solution that would guarantee a balancing of internal and external interests.

Let us go back to the recent past. Let us see what happened on the ground following the General Assembly's adoption of its resolution on the situation in Afghanistan.

First, the foreign forces did withdraw from Afghanistan. The very last soldier has left Afghanistan, in accordance with the Geneva accords.

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

Secondly, despite the withdrawal of foreign forces from all Afghan territory and the fact that they completely ceased all participation in the fighting, the military situation in the country has changed only negligibly, without any real effect on the balance of power. The Afghan Government forces continue to control most cities, including the capital, Kabul, and at the same time the opposition forces control the countryside. So we see that the predictions of the opposition and its allies have not been borne out - they predicted that the Government forces would not be able to resist their attack following the withdrawal of foreign forces - even though the opposition massed considerable military potential and used it to break through governmental defences around Jelalabad. However they suffered terrible losses in both lives and property; this is most regrettable. At the same time, the military situation remains unchanged, with neither victor nor vanquished, and with no way to settle the issue other than by peaceful means. The military option is finished as a solution. It will, however, remain a means for destruction.

Thirdly, it is regrettable that the Afghan opposition made a second miscalculation. Following its failure to enter the cities and to control the capital, and the rest of the country for that matter, the opposition has now fallen back on a second sterile attempt: to use political means to achieve what military means have failed to achieve. Instead of resorting to reason and accepting the principle of dialogue among all Afghan factions without exception in an atmosphere of peace and with a cease-fire, the opposition has proclaimed the establishment of a government, claiming it represents the entire Afghan people when in fact it represents not even the entire opposition. Furthermore, it has totally ignored the legitimate Government and other independent factions.

The siege to which some Afghan cities are being laid, including the capital, Kabul, reminds me of the siege laid to the heroic city of San'a by the Royal

(Mr. Al-Ashtal, Democratic Yemen)

forces. Similar to the case in Afghanistan, the siege of San'a followed the withdrawal of Egyptian forces that had come to the aid of the Yemeni revolution and its republican Government. The siege of San'a, which started in January 1968, continued for more than 70 days, during which the whole population of the city - men, women and children - put up a heroic opposition that ended with the siege broken and the enemy routed, even though the closest friend of the republican Government was thousands of miles away. So what is the situation concerning Kabul and the other Afghan cities?

We can only appeal to all parties for reason and dialogue. We hope this Council will be able to reinforce the General Assembly resolution by calling for a cease-fire.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Democratic Yemen for the kind words he addressed to me.

Mr. PICKERING (United States of America): I should like to begin by congratulating you, Sir, on your assumption of the great responsibilities of the office of President of the Security Council. I am sure that you will discharge these responsibilities with fairness, efficiency and good order.

As the new boy on the block, so to speak, I arrived just as Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo was relinquishing her duties as President of the Security Council. On my own behalf and on that of my delegation I should like to thank her for the superb way in which she carried out her responsibilities as President.

If I may be permitted a few personal words before launching into my statement, I should like to thank you, Mr. President, and all the other members of the Council who have welcomed me so warmly. It is with a great sense of responsibility that I take up my duties in representing my country here. It is something of a disappointment to me that my first statement in the Council should be in a debate on an issue and on an occasion when there is so little promise of constructive activity.

For the last 10 years the Government of the United States has followed with great concern the situation in Afghanistan. There has been tragic suffering as the Afghan people have fought for their freedom from foreign coercion and control. The signing of the Geneva accords one year ago was a major breakthrough, for it led to the withdrawal of Soviet troops - whose presence the international community continually and rightly condemned.

My Government's policy towards Afghanistan is simple and straightforward: it is designed to uphold, above all, the principle that the Afghan people themselves must be allowed to determine their own future, without outside interference or coercion. The conditions must be created for the Afghan people to be able to carry out a true act of self-determination. The illegitimate Kabul régime is now intent on impeding this process as it tries to retain its waning grip on Afghanistan.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

Unfortunately, the present process here in the Council appears to be being used by that same régime as part of such an effort.

Throughout their history the Afghan people have successfully fought off invaders. The fight against the most recent attempt at foreign domination has been long and hard. By defending their sovereignty the Afghan people have earned the right to choose their destiny. The United States strongly supports their desire to make their own decisions about their future now that Soviet forces have left. After their long struggle, we do not believe that the Afghan people would be receptive to unwarranted interference by outside forces.

There is a proper role for the international community to play, of course. It is to continue to support the Afghan people's desire to choose their own government, to provide assistance to the refugees to return home in safety and with honour and to help rebuild the country once stability and peace are achieved.

At this time, there are several United Nations mechanisms in place to deal with the problems this conflict has created. The United States supports them fully. However, the United States will oppose any attempt to use these mechanisms to perpetuate the illegitimate régime in Kabul or to impose a political settlement on the Afghan people.

The United Nations is playing an important humanitarian role for the Afghan people. Teaching refugees how to recognize mines, laid in reckless fashion by Soviet and Kabul forces, will save many lives. We hope that the Soviet Union and Kabul will see fit to turn over to the United Nations maps showing the location of their minefields, particularly in the vast areas which are now free from Kabul's control, so that the clearance of mines can begin and the refugees return to their homes. The appointment of Prince Sadruddin to lead the involvement of United Nations specialized agencies in providing assistance to refugees will help immeasurably to relieve suffering.

(Mr. Pickering, United States)

In this debate the Security Council has heard many charges against Pakistan, a nation that has sacrificed so much to help care for and feed millions of Afghan refugees, the world's largest refugee population. There is no need for me to comment at length on these spurious allegations. They have already been eloquently refuted by the representative of Pakistan. I will note, however, that the United States views with great concern the introduction of Scud missiles, one of which was fired into Pakistan in recent days. This attack illustrates the desperate measures Kabul is prepared to use to stave off the inevitable.

With regard to a cease-fire, my Government believes that this issue can only be decided by the Afghan people themselves.

The United States does not believe that the Security Council can or should at this time take a more prominent role in Afghanistan unless the Afghan people themselves and all of the Afghan parties should actively seek greater Council involvement. We hope that Afghanistan will soon enjoy true peace, stability and the opportunity for its people to determine their own future. The conflict has been a long and arduous one. It took over nine years before Soviet troops were withdrawn. Now they have been gone only two months. The Afghan people should now decide freely and for themselves how they wish to be governed. They must be permitted to find the common denominator or understanding that allows them to restore a purposeful, cohesive national political life.

The United Nations has played a useful and supportive role. Now is the time for the United Nations to support and assist the Afghan people in their efforts to achieve full self-determination. It is not the time to impose a specific future political configuration upon them. They have won the right, through major sacrifices and suffering, to determine their own future. They should have our support in doing so.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the United States of America for his kind words to me.

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue the consideration of the item on the agenda will take place, in all probability, on Wednesday, 19 April 1989, in the morning - if, of course, we are successful in proceeding with the election of a member of the International Court of Justice tomorrow.

The meeting rose at 12.50 p.m.