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ENGLISH

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

Held at Headquarters, New York,
on Friday, 21 April 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

President: Mr. BEJONOGOV

(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. OUYAHIA
Mr. ALENCAR
Mr. FORTIER
Mr. LI Luye
Mr. PEÑALOSA
Mr. TADESSE
Ms. RASI
Mr. BLANC
Mr. RAZALI
Mr. RANA
Mr. BA

Mr. BIRCH
Miss BYRNE
Mr. KOTEVSKI

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The meeting was called to order at 10.55 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 decisions taken at the previous meetings on this item, I invite the Minister for Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan and the representative of Pakistan to take places at the Council table; I invite the representatives of Cuba, Democratic Yemen, the German Democratic Republic, India, Japan, the Lao People's Democratic Republic, Madagascar, Mongolia, Nicaragua, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, Turkey, the United Republic of Tanzania and Viet Nam to take the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

At the invitation of the President, Mr. Wakil (Afghanistan) and Mr. Umer (Pakistan) took places at the Council table; Mr. Oramas Oliva (Cuba), Mr. Al-Ashtal (Democratic Yemen), Mr. Zachmann (German Democratic Republic), Mr. Gharekhan (India), Mr. Kagami (Japan), Mr. Kittikhoun (Lao People's Democratic Republic), Mr. Rabetafika (Madagascar), Mr. Dugersuren (Mongolia), Mr. Serrano Caldera (Nicaragua), Mr. Shihabi (Saudi Arabia), Mr. Al-Masri (Syrian Arab Republic), Mr. Aksin (Turkey), Mr. Chagula (United Republic of Tanzania) and Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung (Viet Nam) took the places reserved for them 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 Angola, Bulgaria, the Comoros and Iraq, in which they request to be invited to participate in the discussion of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite those representatives to participate in the discussion without the right to vote, in accordance 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. Diakenga Serao (Angola), Mr. Stresov (Bulgaria), Mr. Moumin (Comoros) and Mr. Sumaida (Iraq) took the places reserved for them at the side of the Council Chamber.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): The Security Council will now resume its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I should like to draw the attention of members of the Council to document S/20585, which contains the text of a letter dated 12 April 1989 from the Chargé d'affaires ad interim of the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council.

The first speaker is the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic. I invite him to take a place at the Council table and to make his statement.

Mr. KITTIKHOUN (Lao People's Democratic Republic) (interpretation from French): The delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic is delighted to see presiding over the Security Council's work this month a son of the Soviet Union, a country with which we have excellent relations of friendship, fraternity and multifaceted co-operation. Aware as we are, Sir, of your outstanding qualities as a diplomat, your wisdom and your profound knowledge of international affairs, we are sure that the Council's present deliberations will be successful. My delegation would also like to congratulate Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, the Permanent Representative of Senegal, for the competent manner in which she guided the Council's work during the month of March. We also want to take this opportunity to extend our sincere thanks to the members of the Council for having kindly agreed to our request to speak here on this important issue involving international peace and security that is now before the Council.

The diplomatic process begun by the United Nations Secretary-General and the continuing efforts made by all parties concerned to resolve the Afghan problem led last year to the signing of the Geneva Agreements, which was warmly welcomed by a gratified international community. Those accords, which were the result of a long and arduous endeavour, were signed by the Republic of Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, with the two great Powers, the Soviet Union and the United States of America, as guarantors, and under the auspices of the United Nations Secretary-General. They are an edifying achievement of the United Nations machinery for the peaceful settlement of disputes; they have thus opened the way to a comprehensive settlement of the situation in Afghanistan and in the region.

After the signing of the accords, the Soviet Union and the Republic of Afghanistan dedicated themselves to their strict implementation. In accordance with the accords, on 15 February of this year the withdrawal of Soviet troops from Afghanistan was completed. Such strict respect for the time-table set forth in the

(Mr. Kittikhoun, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Geneva accords, which was welcomed by the international community and valued by the United Nations, attests to the Soviet Union's sincerity and to its clear resolve to settle the problem by peaceful means. However, it is most regrettable that, for well-known political motives, the other signatory countries of the accords have seen fit not to discharge their international obligations. Military bases for the training of armed extremist Afghan groups on foreign territory have been enlarged; the participation of foreign advisers and experts specializing in terrorist activities has become much more active - in short, foreign interference in the internal affairs of Afghanistan has not come to an end but has, on the contrary, been seriously stepped up. The tense situation in Afghanistan has not only failed to diminish, it has become increasingly dangerous for both the Afghan people and for peoples in other countries of the region.

The Afghan people, like all the other peoples of the world, are entitled to peace so that they can rebuild their war-torn homeland. Those who once invoked the presence of foreign troops in Afghanistan as a strong pretext for their interference in Afghan affairs are today continuing to conceal their interventionist policies by resorting to other pretexts. Instead of promoting inter-Afghan dialogue to achieve the national reconciliation begun by the legitimate Government of the Republic of Afghanistan, as requested by the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-third session, those circles have in fact encouraged the armed Afghan extremists to opt for military methods and to gain power by force and violence. It is deeply deplorable that bloodshed and a fratricidal war that pits Afghans against Afghans should be used to implement a political policy.

The present situation, as it is emerging, is undoubtedly prejudicial to the Geneva accords, to the resolutions adopted by the Conference of Ministers of

(Mr. Kittikhoun, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

Foreign Affairs of the Non-Aligned Movement and to the resolutions adopted by the United Nations General Assembly at its forty-third session. If nothing is done to remedy it, the situation could degenerate into a widespread regional conflict. The international community must do all it can to defuse this tense situation and to find a political solution to the Afghan problem. At a time when détente and dialogue continue to prevail in international relations, it is difficult to understand the motives of those who continue to advocate the use of force to resolve the conflict in Afghanistan. Far from contributing to a peaceful settlement of the problem, the formation of a so-called interim government on foreign soil, one that has in fact been challenged by other armed opposition groups, can only aggravate it further. This is not a time to shed more Afghan blood but, rather, a time to help the Afghan people towards reconciliation and to settle their conflict by peaceful means.

It is clear from the evidence that aggression and acts of foreign interference in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, in particular in the wake of the complete withdrawal of the Soviet Union's reduced military contingents, have intensified. In the view of the Lao delegation, it is up to the Security Council, which is entrusted with the maintenance of international peace and security, to take the necessary steps to forestall the dangerous consequences of such acts of aggression and interference.

(Mr. Kittikhoun, Lao People's
Democratic Republic)

The long-suffering Afghan people has already endured too much, and everything must be done to put an end to this senseless fratricidal war among the Afghans which is being promoted from outside. The recent deadly battle around the city of Jalalabad, which left thousands of dead and wounded, clearly demonstrated that there can be no military method in the quest for a solution to the Afghan conflict. The sooner contacts and dialogue are established among Afghans within the country and outside, the sooner there will be a chance to restore peace in that country, to the greater interests of peace and stability in the region and in the world.

In this context, the delegation of the Lao People's Democratic Republic welcomes the policy of national reconciliation proclaimed by the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and appeals to the international community to make an active contribution towards the success of this inter-Afghan dialogue. In this new era of détente and international co-operation, the Afghan problem, like all other regional conflicts, requires a political and not a military solution. It is only this course of action that can allow the Afghan people to restore the peace it so needs in order to rebuild their country.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of the Lao People's Democratic Republic for his kind words addressed to the Soviet Union and to me personally.

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

Mr. SERRANO CALDERA (Nicaragua) (interpretation from Spanish): May I congratulate you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. My delegation is gratified that the representative of a country with which we have a great friendship and mutual respect is guiding the work of this lofty forum.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

At the same time I should like to express our appreciation to the Ambassador of Senegal, Her Excellency Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, for having conducted the work of the Council last month in a way that enhanced the prestige of her country.

Nicaragua is addressing the Council convinced more than ever that strict compliance with international law, non-interference in the internal affairs of other States, respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity and the non-use of force in international relations must always govern relations among countries, above all at a time as delicate and significant as the present. There can be no substitute for the principles and purposes of the Charter of the United Nations, and their defence is the responsibility of the international community.

Together with the international community, Nicaragua warmly welcomed the Geneva accords, on the understanding that the Afghan people would be free to forge its own destiny in an atmosphere of freedom on the basis of its own national interests. We regret the course of events and deplore the fact that two friendly non-aligned countries are in a state of confrontation and that interference from outside the region continues in Afghan affairs.

The Geneva accords are a reflection of the letter and spirit of the United Nations Charter and were signed precisely with the purpose of achieving a comprehensive settlement of the situation in Afghanistan and guaranteeing that peace and security in the region would be strengthened. The signing of these accords was achieved, taking into account the interests of the Afghan people themselves and of the various parties involved in the conflict. Article II of the accords is very clear in stipulating that the contracting parties must refrain from concluding agreements or settlements with other States whose goal might be interference or intervention in their internal and external affairs. The use of

(Mr. Serrano Caldera, Nicaragua)

force in any form with a view to disrupting the political, social or economic order, or to overthrow or change the system of any one of them, is prohibited.

Similarly, the statement signed by the Governments of the United States of America and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics stipulates, among other things, respect for the commitments contained in the bilateral agreements between the Republics of Afghanistan and Pakistan, the principles that must govern mutual relations, in particular, non-interference and non-intervention. This represents a commitment on the part of the two super-Powers, which both have the obligation to fulfil.

It is well known that, in fulfilment of the agreements, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics completely withdrew its troops from Afghanistan - an undeniable contribution to the negotiation of an agreement between the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan and the opposition for the establishment of a government of national reconciliation.

Unfortunately, these accords have not been completely fulfilled by all the parties. On the contrary, in violation of the letter and spirit of the agreements, military aid is still being promoted and provided to the irregular forces, thus encouraging the continuation of military action, which has already caused great suffering to the Afghan people and which hinders efforts to achieve a political and negotiated solution to the situation.

In fulfilment of the Geneva accords, not only the prestige and interests of the countries directly involved in the conflict are at stake, but also those of the international community, because the political will of States to find political and negotiated solutions to resolve conflicts is being put to the test - and two of those States are permanent members of the Security Council.

(Mr. Serrano Caldera,
Nicaragua)

Throughout this debate we have listened attentively to statements of support for the right to self-determination and on the need for the Afghan people to determine its own fate without any coercion or foreign interference. We have also heard the request made to the international community to play a more active role in support of the Afghan people both in the repatriation of refugees and in the reconstruction of the country itself. But deeds must be matched by words in order to be consistent with the letter of the Geneva accords.

My delegation, which unreservedly supports the role of the United Nations in the maintenance of international peace, believes that the emplacement of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) at border areas of Afghanistan would contribute to easing tensions and to putting an end to this terrible war. In this way the necessary conditions would also be created for the Afghan people to choose, without coercion and without interference, their own leaders within a policy of national reconciliation.

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

Mr. TADESSE (Ethiopia): At the outset let me convey to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. Your quality of leadership, as demonstrated by your handling of critical issues in the last three weeks, is ample evidence of the wisdom and the rich experience you bring to the Council. It is therefore a pleasure for me to assure you of our confidence in you as President and of our full co-operation in the discharge of the high responsibilities you have assumed.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

I also seize this opportunity to express our satisfaction and heartfelt appreciation to our sister the Permanent Representative of Senegal, Her Excellency Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo, for the sagacity with which she conducted the affairs of the Council during her presidency last month.

It was with a collective sigh of relief that the international community learned last year, on 14 April, of the signing of the Agreements on the settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan. Indeed it was one of the landmark achievements aimed at bringing an end to the human suffering caused by the decade-long fratricidal conflict within that country. As the instruments comprising the settlement were the product of painstaking negotiations that began in 1982, there was great hope that, on their entry into force and their scrupulous observance by all sides, the situation in Afghanistan would change for the better. It is with this same conviction that the General Assembly at its forty-third session also welcomed the conclusion of these Agreements as constituting "an important step towards a comprehensive political solution of the Afghanistan problem".

This week the international community witnessed the first anniversary of the signing of the Geneva accords. Today, we all know that if these accords have brought a change in the Afghan situation it is only in the withdrawal of foreign forces, whose presence in that country was a matter of serious controversy, with grave ramifications in super-Power relations. In full compliance with the provisions of the accords the Soviet Union has withdrawn its forces. But the situation in Afghanistan still remains critical.

Since the expected intra-Afghan dialogue for the establishment of a broad-based government has not yet materialized, the mountains and fields of Afghanistan continue to be a theatre of armed conflict between the forces of the

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Government and the opposition groups. It is unfortunate that neither the objectives of the Agreements nor the various political and diplomatic initiatives in various capitals seem to exert any pressure to bear on the armed opposition to talk peace and not war. Because of this and the opposition's bent on overthrowing the Afghan Government or attempt at excluding it from any political process aimed at determining the country's future, the flames of conflict and war are being kept alive.

In the view of the opposition, dialogue is not being seen as a matchless alternative to the blood-letting. Only recently, by rejecting the proposed cease-fire on the occasion of Ramadan, the opposition has, regrettably, once again demonstrated its choice of a military solution to Afghanistan's problem. We trust that nobody in his right mind will condone this situation involving massive destruction and loss of lives as politically expedient and morally justifiable.

The plight of Afghanistan demands urgent measures that would facilitate a speedy cease-fire and create conditions for a peaceful resolution of the problem. In our view the Geneva accords, on the basis of which the withdrawal of foreign forces was effected, coupled with the resolution of the General Assembly adopted by consensus at the forty-third session, continue to provide conditions for peace talks among Afghans with a view to enabling them to decide their own future without any foreign interference or intervention.

A close look at the continuing crisis in Afghanistan compels us to make the following three observations:

First, the intransigence of the opposition groups to enter into a cease-fire agreement and initiate dialogue among Afghans themselves, the Government of Afghanistan included, stands as a major obstacle to national reconciliation and the restoration of peace and security to the people of Afghanistan.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Secondly, the failure of some of the parties to adhere scrupulously to the provisions of the Geneva accords is a problem that needs to be appropriately addressed, so that the momentum created by the implementation of some of the provisions of the accords will not be lost.

Thirdly, the guarantors to the Geneva accords, as permanent members of the Security Council and in view of their broad responsibilities in global affairs, need to re-examine the present failure in the interest of their credibility and their important role in the international community.

We do not believe recriminations would bring change in the already-polarized and deteriorating situation in Afghanistan. As we are considering this question, it should be recognized that human lives and property continue to be destroyed while many people are still compelled to live in exile. In light of this, the minimum the people of Afghanistan expect is the restoration of normalcy to the country.

(Mr. Tadesse, Ethiopia)

Since we started this debate in the Security Council, despite the divergent views of the concerned parties, we have been much encouraged that, given the political will, the problem is not insurmountable. We are also heartened by the fact that all the parties consider the Geneva Agreements still instrumental in resolving the Afghan problem. The Security Council has also been informed that the parties to the accords reject the use of force as a means for the settlement of disputes in inter-State relations. Those are indeed positive elements. Afghanistan and Pakistan need to build on those positive elements in order to change the present negative situation. In that spirit, we call on all the parties to the Agreements to honour their commitments fully.

Afghanistan and its neighbours stand to gain from peace. In that respect, the United Nations and the international community must see to it that the Agreements are observed by the parties. Towards this end, we support the request for the strengthening of the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan, including the manning of additional border posts on both sides, so that the Mission is enabled sufficiently to assume its responsibilities and help prevent the further deterioration of the situation.

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

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

Mr. NGUYEN DUC HUNG (Viet Nam): I should like at the outset to convey to you, Comrade President, and to all the other members of the Security Council my Ambassador's apology for not being able to be here today to make his statement, owing to the poor state of his health. I shall therefore make the statement on his behalf at these very important Council meetings.

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

I have the honour to convey to you, Comrade President, my Ambassador's and my own congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council. The delegation of Viet Nam would like to express its firm confidence that the Council, under your skilful and able guidance, will proceed with its work successfully. The Soviet Union, which you represent, is highly valued for its great contributions to the cause of international peace and security.

My delegation also takes this opportunity to express its appreciation to your predecessor, Her Excellency Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, for the outstanding manner in which she conducted the Council's business last month.

A year ago, the Geneva accords on Afghanistan were signed after a long, arduous and difficult diplomatic process, and we all welcomed the event with enthusiasm and expectations. Since their signing, we have all hoped that a comprehensive settlement in and around Afghanistan would be achieved, and that peace and good-neighbourliness would be ensured, thus eventually ending a decade of tension and confrontation and thereby beginning a new chapter in the relations among the countries of the region. In strict observance of these Agreements and with goodwill the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has since pursued a policy of national reconciliation and been making every effort for ensuring the region's peace and security. Likewise, in accordance with the Geneva accords the Soviet Union completed the withdrawal of its troops from Afghanistan on 15 February 1989, as scheduled, and it has taken actions to fulfil its commitments. All other provisions of the Geneva accords would have been fulfilled had all the other parties concerned pursued the same efforts of goodwill and responsibility and refrained from doing anything that could hamper the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the peace and security of the region. Regrettably, that has not been the case.

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

It is most alarming that the recent acts of interference and military intervention in the internal affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan have acquired an ever increased intensification and ever more dangerous and wider dimensions. In fact, those acts of interference have changed from the imposed undeclared war of the past 10 years into a war of aggression against that sovereign country. Aiming at fanning the flames of the armed conflict, opposition extremists, with encouragement and arms supplies extended from outside, have pushed forward the fratricidal war in Afghanistan to an ever more grave and fiercer level, against the aspirations of the Afghan people as well as the interests of peace and security in the region. The recent creation of a so-called interim Government of Afghanistan in a foreign land is of no legality and only serves to prolong the bloodshed and increase the complexities of the situation and instability in the region.

At the same time, foreign territory continues to be used for the military training of the opposition groups, for the stockpiling and transfer of weapons and ammunitions and as a springboard for interference and aggression against the Republic of Afghanistan. All those acts run wholly counter to the provisions of the Geneva accords and must be condemned and put to an end by all possible and effective measures.

Faced with this situation, the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan has time and again appealed for a settlement through political means, for national reconciliation and for strict observance of the Geneva accords. In his letter of 10 March 1989 to the guarantors of the Geneva accords and to the United Nations Secretary-General the President of the Republic of Afghanistan has urged that every necessary measure be taken in order to prevent a further deterioration of the situation. The Soviet Government has also called upon the Secretary-General and

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung, Viet Nam)

the United States to take effective measures, as a matter of urgency, to put an end to foreign intervention in Afghanistan and thereby implement the Geneva accords in their entirety. Only a political settlement to the situation will benefit the peoples of the region as well as international peace and security. It is necessary, in this context, to reiterate General Assembly resolution 43/20, which was adopted by consensus, whereby the General Assembly earnestly called for the scrupulous respect for and faithful implementation of the Geneva accords by all the parties concerned, who should fully abide by their letter and spirit.

(Mr. Nguyen Duc Hung,
Viet Nam)

The Vietnamese people, bound to the Afghan people by close relations of friendship, fully share their grave concern over the recent developments resulting from those acts of interference and aggression and demand that they be prevented and stopped forthwith. At this moment the people and Government of Viet Nam, as always, extend their fraternal solidarity and whole-hearted support to the people and Government of the Republic of Afghanistan in the heroic defence of their homeland. We support the appeal made in the 10 March 1989 letter from the President of the Republic of Afghanistan and the proposals put forward in the statement before this Council by the Minister for Foreign Affairs, Mr. Abdul Wakil. A solution to the domestic issues of Afghanistan can be achieved only through peaceful negotiations among the Afghan opposing groups aimed at national reconciliation, the cessation of bloodshed and the establishment of a broad-based government acceptable to all concerned - as has been proposed by the Republic of Afghanistan.

It is our hope that these appeals will be met with a constructive response from the parties concerned. It is also our hope that the Council's deliberations, which the Republic of Afghanistan has called for with high responsibility and with a view to achieving a political settlement, will result in the Council's taking effective measures to fulfil the task entrusted to it - that is, to maintain peace and security.

The PRESIDENT (interpretation from Russian): I thank the representative of Viet Nam for the kind words he addressed to me and my country.

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

Mr. MOUMIN (Comoros): It gives me great pleasure to express my delegation's congratulations to you, Sir, on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month. Your diplomatic skills and wisdom, as well as the deep respect most of us have for your country's role in and contribution to the solution of many international problems, including the question under discussion, will ensure a successful conclusion of the Council's deliberations.

Let me also take this opportunity of expressing the profound appreciation of my delegation for the exemplary manner in which Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal guided the deliberations of the Security Council last month.

Since this is the first time I have addressed the Security Council this year, I should like to convey my delegation's warm congratulations to the new members of the Council and wish them every success in carrying out the important responsibilities they have assumed.

This debate coincides with the first anniversary of the signing of the Geneva Agreements on the question of Afghanistan. My delegation is amazed at the coincidence. But is it mere coincidence or is there something more to it? That is a \$1 million question to which my delegation has not yet been able to get a convincing answer.

Having said that, my delegation would like to avail itself of this opportunity of the first anniversary of the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan to commend the parties to them. There can be no doubt that the conclusion of the Agreements constituted an important step towards the very-much-desired political solution of the Afghanistan problem.

After 10 years of persistent demands by the international community for the withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan, at long last, on 14 April 1988,

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

under the auspices of the United Nations, Agreements were concluded in Geneva by which the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics agreed to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. By 15 February 1989 the withdrawal had been completed.

It is in order for one to state that with the conclusion of the Geneva Agreements on 14 April 1988 and the completion of the Soviet troop withdrawal on 15 February 1989, the external aspects of the Afghanistan situation were successfully addressed.

Hence the situation in Afghanistan has changed its status. It has ceased to be a question of foreign aggression and interference and has become a question of an internal struggle by the Afghan people for the restoration of their national and human rights - a purely internal matter which does not come within the ambit of Article 34 and Article 35 (1) of the United Nations Charter. Consequently my delegation is inclined to support the views of Ambassador Shihabi of Saudi Arabia, who rightly stated that the Council's deliberation on this issue

"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". (S/PV.2853, p. 11)

My delegation was greatly impressed by the able manner in which the Permanent Representative of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics presented his arguments against Pakistan at the Council's last meeting. We noted with keen interest that all his allegations are based on violations of the Geneva Agreements - allegations which I must admit, if proven, must constitute a source of grave concern to my delegation. However, if the issue under consideration is in fact nothing but allegations of violations of the Geneva Agreements, then my delegation cannot but agree with the representative of Japan's questioning of the appropriateness of this debate.

(Mr. Moumin, Comoros)

Surely the Geneva Agreements must have provisions that envisage a mechanism for the settlement of disputes arising from the Agreements. Furthermore it is our understanding that the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP) has been seized of the matter and is duly conducting a detailed investigation. It would therefore be prudent for the Council to refrain from engaging in a discussion that might affect the impartiality of UNGOMAP's own investigation.

Manoeuvring to convene the Council for propaganda purposes will not help to bring the needed peace to war-torn Afghanistan.

The crux of the matter in this tragic continuation of the conflict in Afghanistan is the consequence of the continuing denial to the Afghan people of their right to self-determination. We believe that peace and stability can be restored to Afghanistan only with the establishment of a broad-based government acceptable to the Afghan people. The establishment of such a government, which is the exclusive prerogative of the Afghans themselves, was acknowledged in the Geneva Agreements and in General Assembly consensus resolution 43/20 of 3 November 1988; that resolution, inter alia, mandated the Secretary-General to facilitate the establishment of a broad-based government.

The time has come to heal the grievous wounds inflicted on Afghanistan. The Afghan people, who for nearly 10 years have borne incalculable suffering, cannot be expected to accept a régime that for 10 years have given them nothing but suffering and destruction. The situation in Afghanistan can be resolved only when a comprehensive political settlement in accordance with the wishes of the Afghan nation has been achieved and a broad-based government, fully representative of the Afghan people, has been established in that country.

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

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

Mr. SUMAIDA (Iraq) (interpretation from Arabic): Allow me at the outset to convey to you, Sir, my delegation's congratulations on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for April. This month always reminds us of the great Treaty of friendship concluded 19 years ago, in April, between Iraq and the Soviet Union. Your rich experience and diplomatic skill guarantee success in the Council's work this month.

I should also like to express my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of friendly Senegal for the very efficient and successful conduct of the business of the Council last month.

When the international community is faced with the task of deciding whether a step is correct or erroneous, or whether a cause is just or otherwise, it must use the most important yardstick available to it - that is, the rules of international law, the purposes and principles of the United Nations embodied in its Charter, and United Nations resolutions, as well as commitments entered into in accordance with international conventions, foremost among which is the commitment of all to refrain from the use or threat of force against the sovereignty, territorial integrity or political independence of any State.

Therefore, in addressing the situation in Afghanistan, my delegation wishes to reaffirm the need to arrive at a peaceful settlement that ensures the independence, sovereignty and non-aligned status of that friendly country. Any violation of the sovereignty or independence of any State is a clear breach of the purposes and principles of the United Nations Charter.

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

Since the beginning of the regrettable incidents, the position adopted by Iraq has been consonant with the interests of the Afghan people and the other peoples of the region. It has always been in harmony with the positions taken by the Non-Aligned Movement and United Nations resolutions. Iraq has thus proceeded from the historic bonds that link the peoples of Iraq and Afghanistan and other neighbouring peoples. In all forums Iraq has consistently supported the sovereignty, independence, non-aligned status and territorial integrity of Afghanistan as the basic conditions for a peaceful settlement of this question and indispensable to ensuring the Afghan people's right freely to choose its form of government and its social, economic and political path free from any foreign intervention.

The stability of the situation in Afghanistan is one of the most important factors contributing to the stability of the whole region and thus to the prosperity and progress of its peoples and their ability to face development and economic problems - all of which is of benefit to international peace and security and the promotion of rapprochement and détente, which now prevail in international relations, particularly in the field of the settlement of regional conflicts.

Having supported the Geneva accords signed on 14 April last between the concerned parties, we call upon all parties to refrain from any act that might render the problem more complex or intense. We call upon all parties to act in accordance with the resolutions and principles of the United Nations and the interests of the people of Afghanistan and the other peoples of the region and the world.

The path of violence and continued conflict cannot lead to a just settlement of the situation in Afghanistan. Proceeding from its faith in the positive principles of international relations and good-neighbourliness, Iraq calls upon the

(Mr. Sumaida, Iraq)

international community to encourage all efforts aimed at the achievement of national reconciliation in Afghanistan in order to save that country and its people from further killings, destruction and displacement. Undoubtedly, the long years of war have left a legacy of great tragedy for the people of Afghanistan and destruction of its economy and in all areas of life. Like the rest of the peoples of the world, the Afghan people has a right to dignified life in an independent and non-aligned State, and enjoyment of its full sovereignty and territorial integrity.

Therefore, recalling General Assembly resolution 43/20, adopted unanimously at the forty-fifth meeting of this session, on 3 November 1988, my delegation believes that the principles contained therein provide the necessary basis for all efforts to end the tragedy afflicting the friendly people of Afghanistan. We reiterate our call to all parties to do their utmost to contain the dangers involved in the situation and to enable the Afghan people to achieve national reconciliation in an independent and non-aligned Afghanistan.

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

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

Mr. STRESOV (Bulgaria): Comrade President, allow me first to congratulate you on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the current month and to wish you every success in your important work.

May I also express the deep appreciation of my delegation for the wise and highly professional way in which Ambassador Absa Claude Diallo of Senegal led the work of the Council as President in the month of March.

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

The time that has elapsed since the withdrawal of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan has clearly shown that the people of Afghanistan and its legitimate Government are fully in a position to defend the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the country against attempts to promote a different course of events by means of war and aggression from abroad.

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

Now more than ever it is necessary to utilize all opportunities to overcome Afghanistan's internal differences through peaceful means. In this respect, the patience, consistency and determination of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan in steadily pursuing, even in these difficult moments, its policy of national reconciliation should be welcomed and encouraged. The rejection of the call for an immediate cease-fire as the basis for further peaceful steps towards a settlement in the interest of all parties is to be deplored. Ill-advised political manoeuvres, such as the recent establishment outside Afghanistan of a so-called interim government - which, not surprisingly, has failed to gather the full support even of those it claims to represent - and attempts to resolve the conflict by force can only harm the chances for an early, just and viable settlement. The armed extremists, recruited, based and trained abroad, supplied from abroad and encouraged by their supporters in the region and overseas, are carrying out a further escalation of the military conflict. Continuing reports of direct foreign involvement in the hostilities cannot but give rise to the most serious concern.

In his detailed statement on 11 April, His Excellency Mr. Abdul Wakil, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan, brought to the attention of the Council the grave situation which is developing as a result of the increasing outside interference in the internal affairs of his country, a full-fledged Member of the United Nations. The People's Republic of Bulgaria calls for the immediate cessation of all such interference. These alarming developments pose a tangible threat to peace and security in the region and the world. They also run counter to the Geneva Agreements on Afghanistan of 14 April 1988. We welcome the fact that the Republic of Afghanistan and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are strictly honouring their part of the obligations stemming from the Geneva Agreements, and we invite all the other signatories to adopt the same approach without further delay.

(Mr. Stresov, Bulgaria)

The United Nations too has a vital role to play. The Security Council should consider the question before it with the utmost care and responsibility, as it is mandated to do under the Charter of the United Nations with regard to matters involving threats to international peace and security. All Member States should endeavour to assist the United Nations in its efforts to ensure the efficient and successful completion of the mandate of initiatives already under way, in particular the United Nations Good Offices Mission in Afghanistan and Pakistan (UNGOMAP), with respect to the implementation of all aspects of the Geneva Agreements.

We particularly welcome the valuable efforts of the Secretary-General and his renewed

"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 in General Assembly resolution 43/20".

(Press Release SG/SM/4286)

We support the proposals formulated in the statements of the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Afghanistan and the representative of the USSR concerning possible ways to overcome the present dangerous situation, in particular the convening of an international conference on Afghanistan and the measures which could be undertaken as the first steps leading to it.

As recently stated by the President of the State Council of the People's Republic of Bulgaria, Mr. Todor Zhivkov, in a message (S/20588) to His Excellency Mr. Najibullah, President of the Republic of Afghanistan, my country reiterates its solidarity with the heroic struggle of the Afghan people and with the consistent policy of the Government of the Republic of Afghanistan aimed at halting the bloodshed and achieving the long-awaited peace on Afghan soil in an independent, non-aligned and neutral Afghanistan.

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

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

Mr. DIAKENGA SERAO (Angola) (interpretation from French): Allow me first of all, Sir, to congratulate you warmly on your assumption of the presidency of the Security Council for the month of April. Our two countries enjoy excellent relations, on which I need not dwell at length. Your professional qualities and wisdom guarantee success in your noble and difficult tasks.

I take this opportunity also to pay a tribute to your predecessor, Her Excellency Mrs. Absa Claude Diallo, Permanent Representative of Senegal to the United Nations, for the skill with which she guided the Council's work during the month of March.

The alarming and worrisome facts of the situation around and within Afghanistan, which is leading to a new escalation of the conflict in that country, do not fulfil the hope felt by the international community when the Geneva accords were signed on 14 April 1988.

We regret those facts, which could raise a new obstacle to settling the Afghan question. We believe not only that the Geneva accords are a balanced set of commitments accepted by all the parties, but also that they take into account the varying interests of the parties. Hence only implementing those accords can ensure the beginning of a genuine dialogue among Afghans and the elimination of the differences which pit Afghanistan against some of its neighbours. Implementation would undoubtedly be a contribution to the peoples of the whole region. Moreover, it is demanded by the entire international community, which wishes the tragedy of the Afghan people to come to an end.

(Mr. Diakenga Serao, Angola)

The Afghan conflict is a human tragedy and the entire international community must work to end it. My delegation considers the stubborn disregard of the constructive proposals of the Afghan Government displayed by the Afghan opposition as an attempt to settle the question by warlike means. Such an attempt is in defiance of the efforts that led to the conclusion of the Geneva Agreements, to which the United Nations has given its total support. We also believe that the support being given the Afghan opposition by certain Governments is putting off the possibilities of establishing a lasting peace in that country.

There is little need to dwell upon the obligations that devolve upon the parties to the Geneva Agreements, particularly that of respecting commitments undertaken. Indeed, that is the only way to achieve peace and the only way to sustain the judgement of posterity. The principle of respect for commitments undertaken represents civilized values in international relations. It is therefore absolutely necessary to pursue that course. In any event, the primary condition for making progress in that direction is respect for the sovereignty of States and non-interference in the internal affairs of other parties.

The Security Council, which embodies the international community's aspirations with regard to the maintenance of peace and international security, must work to bring all parties to agree to a peaceful process for settling the Afghan question in order to spare the region a further escalation of the war. If the Council fails to take advantage of the opportunity provided by the framework of the Geneva Agreements on the situation in Afghanistan and if the Council allows the principle of the primacy of force to prevail in the Afghan conflict, then international legal principles, and particularly respect for commitments in international relations, will be jeopardized. Moreover, such a situation will have negative repercussions, and very serious ones, on the present positive trend that has emerged in the search for negotiated solutions to other regional conflicts.

(Mr. Diakenga Serao, Angola)

In conclusion, my Government is in full solidarity with the Government and the people of Afghanistan in their efforts to find a political and peaceful solution to the Afghan problem, a solution, obviously, that will take fully into account the sovereignty of that country.

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

There are no further speakers inscribed on my list for this meeting. The next meeting of the Security Council to continue consideration of the item on its agenda will take place on Monday, 24 April 1989, at 10.30 a.m.

The meeting rose at 12.15 p.m.