



**Permanent Mission of**  
**Malaysia**  
**to the United Nations**

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**STATEMENT BY H.E. KAMILAN MAKSOM, REPRESENTATIVE OF MALAYSIA ON  
AGENDA ITEM 19: THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AT THE PLENARY OF THE  
62<sup>ND</sup> SESSION OF THE UNITED NATIONS GENERAL ASSEMBLY, NEW YORK,  
5 NOVEMBER 2007**

Mr. President,

Let me first of all extend my delegation's appreciation to the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan as contained in Document A/62/345 dated 21 September 2007. The report provides a comprehensive description of the situation in Afghanistan and offers valuable observations on possible course of actions. My delegation also recognises the valuable work of Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan, Mr. Tom Koenigs, and members of the UN Assistant Mission in Afghanistan, under the prevailing difficult and challenging conditions in Afghanistan.

Mr. President;

2. My delegation congratulates the government of Afghanistan for the commendable stride in developing the institutional capacities of the different branches of government to fulfil their mandated responsibilities. We applaud the work carried out in the National Assembly especially in the final drafting of electoral law and the accompanying law to reform the Independent Electoral Commission, in anticipation of the next presidential and parliamentary elections in 2009 and 2010 respectively. This is a crucial step to further entrench the democratic process in the country. The National Assembly has also succeeded in passing the national budget and is currently working on a number of important laws, including the Advocates Law, Media Law and a number of laws relevant to key security sector reforms.

3. My delegation also commends the progress made in improving government delivery system notably in economic development, education, health and rural development sectors. We are pleased to note the increasing number of children receiving education in Afghanistan which reached a record high of 6.07 million, including 2.17 million girls. We also note the improvement in healthcare with health coverage reaching 82 percent of the population. Likewise the infant mortality rate and maternal mortality rate have been reduced to 3.5 percent and 6.6 percent respectively.

Mr. President;

4. Despite these achievements, we note with concern that the situation in Afghanistan remains fragile. A slight reverse in the security situation, especially with regards to the threat of insurgency,

and the credibility of the government to deliver further on the reform process, could undo all the progress made thus far.

5. In light of these concerns, my delegation continues to remain apprehensive over the reported deterioration in the security sector. Violent attacks including suicide attacks attributed to the Al Qaeda, the Taliban and other armed extremist groups have increased in the course of the year, especially in the Southern and Eastern provinces. We note the increase in violent incidents per month from 425 violent incidents in 2006 to nearly 548 violent incidents per month in the first three quarters of 2007, including a total of 100 suicide attacks. These incidents have claimed many civilian lives. More alarmingly are the number of deaths and injuries of a large and increasing number of civilians and non-combatants caused by combats operations of both pro- and anti-government forces. UNAMA has recorded some 1,000 civilian deaths from January to 31 August 2007. More efforts therefore must be done to protect civilians.

6. My delegation also views with concern the deteriorating narcotics situation in Afghanistan. In spite of the government's counter-narcotic efforts, poppy cultivation has increased by 17 percent, which potentially increases opium production by 34 percent thus making Afghanistan the world's main opium producing country. This situation has far reaching security repercussions for both Afghanistan and countries beyond its border. At the domestic level, the burgeoning poppy cultivation is creating the growing nexus between the narcotic trade and the insurgence groups and feared to finance terrorism. Moreover, the narcotic trade activities further exacerbate the corruption problem within government and provincial machineries which in the end would seriously erode the credibility and the capacity of the government.

7. We share the view that the resolution to the situation in Afghanistan would require an integrated and concerted civilian and military approach. Military actions alone would not be sufficient to overcome the root causes of the problem. Government delivery system should be improved including good governance and respect for human rights, to foster confidence and credibility of the government among the Afghan population. There is a need to also carry out an all-inclusive national reconciliation process to avoid the marginalisation of any groups.

Mr. President;

8. My delegation firmly believe that sustained support of the international community remain indispensable for Afghanistan to overcome the immediate challenges and to help it implement the National Development Strategy which offers a viable prospect for lasting political stability and economic prosperity. We reiterate our support for UNAMA to continue to take the central and impartial role in galvanizing different elements of international support and to monitor the implementation of the development and security strategy on the ground in close consultation with the Afghan government.

9. On Malaysia's part, we reiterate our commitment to cooperate and work closely with Afghanistan and where appropriate, other members of the international community. We will continue to extend assistance to Afghanistan under the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP) to develop the much needed human capital in various fields for Afghanistan's development.

Thank you, Mr. President.