



MALAYSIA

PERMANENT MISSION TO THE UNITED NATIONS

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**STATEMENT BY
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TO THE UNITED NATIONS**

**THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN
7403rd MEETING OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL**

NEW YORK, 16 MARCH 2015

Mr. President,

At the outset, allow me to thank Special Representative Nicholas Haysom for his report, which provides a comprehensive description of the current situation in Afghanistan and contains valuable observations. Mr. Haysom and the members of the UN Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) deserve our appreciation for their dedication in carrying out their duties under the challenging conditions in the country.

2. I wish to also thank Ambassador Zahir Tanin for his statement, which outlines his Government's views and analysis of the latest developments. Malaysia congratulates Afghanistan on its historic transition into the Transformation Decade. The process, and the progress, are now firmly in the hands of its own people. I take this opportunity to reaffirm to Ambassador Tanin Malaysia's commitment as a partner to Afghanistan in this moment of progress and development.

Mr. President,

3. As stated in the December 2014 "Realizing Self-Reliance" document, Afghanistan now stands alongside Malaysia and other Muslim-majority democracies in the community of nations. The Afghan leadership's strong testament to inclusivity and stability has been reflected in a number of subsequent positive developments on the political track.

4. We commend the patient and respectful conduct of the ongoing negotiations between President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah under the power-sharing framework. The way forward for the Afghan people should be grounded in the principles of the country's sovereignty, independence, territorial integrity and national unity. In this context, we wish to express our hope for a successful outcome to the finalization of the National Unity Government.

5. Similarly, the primary assumption of full responsibility by Afghanistan's institutions in the security sector should also be on the basis that the transition is not limited to the security process. The transition should encompass Afghan leadership in governance and development, consistent with the norms of national ownership.

Mr. President,

6. The "Realizing Self-Reliance" document outlines numerous reform measures which the Afghan Government aims to carry out. It is evident that they are under no illusions on the complexity of this exercise. While we note the realistic assessments presented by the Afghan Government, we are more encouraged by their drive and determination to succeed. We are confident that Afghanistan will continue to build momentum on this course, and we look forward to the upcoming action plan on the implementation of their priorities.

7. The Afghan Government has pledged itself to strong international engagement with increased Afghan ownership and leadership in the areas of security, governance, developments and effective delivery of commitments, inter alia, through the Kabul Process, the London Conference and the Tokyo Mutual Assistance Framework. At the same time, we would also note the importance for political and developmental activities of international organizations active in Afghanistan, as well as other international aid and resources, to be in greater alignment with the priorities set by Afghan Government.

8. Malaysia believes that at this stage it remains imperative for the United Nations and the international community to continue to lend their support, encouragement and assistance to Afghanistan through reconstruction and redevelopment efforts for rebuilding the country. In light of the crucial need for sustained assistance, we hope the donor community will expeditiously fulfil their commitments to this end.

9. In relation to the humanitarian emergency response to last month's extreme weather. Malaysia extends our condolences to the Government and people of Afghanistan, following the tragic loss of over 220 lives and the displacement of over 6,000 families across the country. We were encouraged by last week's report by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), which stated that the emergency response in the district of Panjher has been phased out, and the response gap in assessed areas appear to be minimized. Malaysia hopes and prays that the people and Government of Afghanistan will quickly recover from this adversity.

Mr. President,

10. Despite the noteworthy developments, Malaysia remains deeply concerned on the security situation on the ground. As reflected in the recent UNAMA Report on the Protection of Civilians in Armed Conflict in Afghanistan, the year 2014 saw the highest number of documented civilian casualties, with a total of 3,699 deaths and 6,849 injuries were documented.

11. Malaysia condemns the deliberate targeting of civilians by anti-Government elements, which has led to the highest toll on civilian lives in Afghanistan since UNAMA began documenting civilian casualties. All parties should respect both the letter and spirit of international humanitarian law, in order to win the hearts and minds of the Afghan people towards their national reconciliation and integration process.

12. My delegation is particularly alarmed on the increasingly negative impact of the conflict on children. We are shocked by the repeated incidents of anti-government armed groups killing and maiming Afghan boys and girls, as well as attacking schools and hospitals. Malaysia welcomes the adoption and endorsement on 2 February 2015 of a decree by President Ghani to criminalize underage recruitment into armed forces. We encourage the Afghan Government to continue to intensify its efforts to comply with the action plan it had adopted pursuant to resolution 1612 (2005).

Mr. President,

13. Malaysia observes an increasingly positive atmosphere in the region in support of the Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace and reconciliation process. We welcome the convening of the inaugural Afghanistan-China-Pakistan Trilateral Strategic Dialogue held on 9 February in Kabul. We also look forward to Pakistan's hosting of the Fifth Heart of Asia – Istanbul Process Ministerial Conference later this year, following the successful outcome of the previous Heart of Asia Conference held in Beijing in October 2014.

14. These constructive regional engagements are essential to reinforce support for Afghanistan's own efforts towards an inclusive reconciliation process. On that note, we commend the convening of the national conference of the Afghan People's Dialogue for Peace on 15 January this year, and we are encouraged by the efforts of the High Peace Council. This convergence of developments deserves the focus and attention of the international community, and we hope that key stakeholders in the country and in the region will continue to intensify their efforts to this end.

15. Malaysia firmly supports the reconciliation and reintegration efforts undertaken by the Government of Afghanistan, within the context of respect for the country's democracy and constitution, non-violence, and respecting the rights of all Afghan people. We submit that an approach based on the principle of moderation would be the most effective way to find common ground and overcome the voices of extremists.

Mr. President,

16. While Afghanistan endeavours to sustain peace and stability in the country, Malaysia remains fully committed in its peacebuilding efforts and provision of assistance to Afghanistan. I would like to take this opportunity in the Council to record our appreciation to the Government of Afghanistan for their invitation for Malaysia to join the International Stabilization Assistance Force (ISAF).

17. Prior to the ending of the ISAF mandate, a Malaysian Medical Team had been stationed in the country to provide medical, dental and healthcare services to the Afghan civilian population. I should also thank New Zealand in this regard, as the Malaysian Medical Team received valuable logistical support from the New Zealand Transitional Reconstruction Team while based together in Bamyan province.

18. The Malaysian Government is also committed in our provision of technical capacity-building programs for Afghanistan. Since 2002, more than 520 Afghan officials have received training in Malaysia, through the Malaysian Technical Cooperation Programme (MTCP), the Third Country Training Programme (TCTP), as well as through other frameworks.

Mr. President,

19. Malaysia firmly believes that the international community should continue to support Afghanistan as the country proceeds down the path it has charted. The interconnected nature of existing challenges requires sustained and mutually reinforcing progress in various fields. The entry into the Transformation Decade will bring forth new challenges, as well as new approaches for collaboration in resolving them. We should now concentrate on looking at approaches to complement and seal the gains which Afghanistan has achieved.

20. Through the resolution just adopted this morning, the Security Council has set out the mandate for UNAMA for the next twelve months. We are pleased that UNAMA and the Government of Afghanistan will continue to maintain a close partnership, which is vital in ensuring sustainable peace and stability in the country. The Secretary-General has also now been tasked to examine the modalities for the next steps in the evolution of UNAMA's relationship with Afghanistan. We hope that this will lead to a more productive and effective collaboration between the host country, the United Nations system, and the international community. I would like to express my appreciation to the Spanish delegation for their hard work on the preparation of the resolution.

21. Let me conclude by reaffirming Malaysia's sincere commitment in supporting the Afghan Government in its efforts to achieve peace, security and stability in the country, during the Transformation Decade and beyond.

Thank you Mr. President.