

19. The situation in Afghanistan

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held 11 meetings and adopted four resolutions in connection with the situation in Afghanistan.

The Council focused on the gradual transition to Afghan responsibility for providing security for the period after the withdrawal of the United Nations-authorized International Security Assistance Force (ISAF). It considered the framework for socioeconomic development and regional integration. The Council also discussed the reconciliation process, human rights, the preparations for the 2014 elections, and the fight against drug trafficking.

The Council extended the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) twice for periods of one year.⁵⁵⁶ It also twice extended, for periods of one year, the authorization of ISAF,⁵⁵⁷ under Chapter VII of the Charter, including authorization for the Member States participating in ISAF to take all necessary measures to fulfil its mandate.

Security and economic development

During the period under review, the transition of the responsibility for security from ISAF to the Afghan National Security Forces, as well as greater Afghan ownership in the political and socioeconomic sphere were discussed at every meeting held under this item.

In his briefing to the Council on 20 March 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of UNAMA reported that the international military presence was gradually transferring full security responsibility in Afghanistan to the Afghan National Security Forces and would finish its current mission by the end of 2014. He underlined that the transition process had thus far been on track and on target, but added that the process also entailed accelerated Afghan leadership, responsibility

and accountability in governance, the rule of law, justice, economic development, and combating corruption and poverty.⁵⁵⁸ The representative of Afghanistan called this process a paradigm shift, with the aim of empowering Afghanistan to take charge of its own destiny, and said that transition should be followed by the transformation decade 2015-2024. He welcomed the Istanbul process on regional integration, which he called a visionary step forward to achieving a benevolent regional order, characterized by cooperation, collaboration and shared goals.⁵⁵⁹ Speakers in general welcomed the transition of responsibility in security and socioeconomic development, and pointed to the importance of the Chicago Summit of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) held in May 2012 and the Tokyo Conference of July 2012 for the future of these processes.⁵⁶⁰ The representative of the Russian Federation argued against artificial deadlines for withdrawing international forces from Afghanistan, saying that ISAF troops had received a mandate from the Security Council and should therefore present a final report to the Council before withdrawing.⁵⁶¹

In his briefing on 27 June 2012 the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations informed Council members on the progress made in the transition, namely at the NATO Summit in Chicago on defining the shape of, and the long-term support to, the Afghan National Security Forces, and at the ministerial conference in Kabul on regional cooperation held in Kabul on 14 June. He expressed the hope that long-term commitments to the socioeconomic development sector would be made later that year at the Tokyo Conference.⁵⁶² On the transition in the security sector, the representative of Afghanistan also reported on the Chicago Summit and provided information on the establishment of bilateral partnership agreements with

⁵⁵⁶ See resolutions 2041 (2012) and 2096 (2013); for more information on the mandate of UNAMA, see part X, sect. II, "Political and peacebuilding missions".

⁵⁵⁷ Resolutions 2069 (2012) and 2120 (2013); for more information on the mandate of ISAF, see part VIII, sect. III, "Peacekeeping operations led by regional arrangements".

⁵⁵⁸ S/PV.6735, pp. 2-3.

⁵⁵⁹ Ibid., pp. 5-6.

⁵⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 7 (Germany); p. 9 (Portugal); p. 11 (South Africa); pp. 13-14 (India); p. 18 (France); p. 20 (Azerbaijan); pp. 22-23 (United States); p. 24 (United Kingdom); p. 26 (European Union); p. 27 (Australia); p. 28 (Japan); pp. 29-30 (Turkey); and pp. 30-31 (Norway).

⁵⁶¹ Ibid., p. 21.

⁵⁶² S/PV.6793, pp. 2-3.

various countries.⁵⁶³ The Assistant Secretary-General for Operations of NATO said that the Chicago Summit had assessed progress on the transition of security to Afghan responsibility. With the third tranche of transition starting in Afghanistan, Afghan soldiers and police would be taking the lead for the security of 75 per cent of the population within the following months. The Afghan security forces were on schedule to take full responsibility for security at the conclusion of the ISAF mission by the end of 2014. He said that in Chicago, NATO, together with ISAF partners, had confirmed that it would begin a new mission after 2014 to train, advise and assist the Afghan security forces, at the invitation of the Government.⁵⁶⁴ In general, the Chicago Summit was welcomed by speakers as an expression of support beyond 2014, after the military drawdown and the end of the transition period.⁵⁶⁵ The representative of the Russian Federation, however, said that full clarity was necessary in the planning of a new NATO operation in Afghanistan, including its mandate, strength and mission. Such an operation should be sanctioned by the Security Council, however, only after the ISAF mission had reported to the Council on the implementation of its mandate.⁵⁶⁶ The representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran cautioned that a long-term international engagement in Afghanistan should not lead to a long-term military presence.⁵⁶⁷

In his briefing to the Council on 20 September 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported on the Tokyo Conference of 8 July, at which the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework was concluded. Donor pledges for social and economic development were matched by Afghan Government commitments, notably in the areas of good governance, anti-corruption, human rights and

elections.⁵⁶⁸ Several speakers emphasized the importance of both sides living up to their pledges.⁵⁶⁹

At the same meeting, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the representative of Afghanistan both reported on progress in the transition of security responsibility.⁵⁷⁰ In general, participants in the debate welcomed the progress achieved,⁵⁷¹ some speakers also pointing to an increase in killings of ISAF personnel by Afghan security forces⁵⁷² as well as an increase in insurgent-initiated attacks.⁵⁷³ The representative of the Russian Federation reiterated his request for clarity with regard to a residual military presence beyond 2014.⁵⁷⁴ The representative of France stated that the aim was to leave in place professional, credible and sustainable Afghan security forces, to be funded entirely by the Afghan State by no later than 2024.⁵⁷⁵

On 19 December 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General welcomed the increased attention to the professionalization of the police with a law enforcement role distinct from the military, in line with Tokyo commitments.⁵⁷⁶ The representative of Afghanistan reported that the first three stages of the five-stage security transition process were nearly complete and that the overwhelming majority of the population of Afghanistan resided in areas where Afghan security forces had lead security responsibility. He said that security had improved in those areas.⁵⁷⁷ The representative of the United States added that over 75 per cent of the Afghan population was living in

⁵⁶³ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁵⁶⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 31.

⁵⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Afghanistan); p. 8 (Germany); p. 11 (United Kingdom); p. 13 (Guatemala); p. 14 (United States); pp. 16-17 (Colombia); p. 21 (Azerbaijan); p. 23 (France); p. 25 (Australia); p. 27 (Japan); p. 28 (European Union); p. 29 (Turkey); and p. 30 (New Zealand).

⁵⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 22.

⁵⁶⁷ *Ibid.* p. 35.

⁵⁶⁸ [S/PV.6840](#), p. 2.

⁵⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Portugal); p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 8 (United Kingdom); p. 9 (Colombia); p. 11 (United States, Morocco); p. 12 (Togo); p. 14 (South Africa); pp. 16-17 (Azerbaijan); p. 17 (France); p. 23 (Germany); p. 24 (Japan); pp. 26-27 (European Union); p. 28 (Australia); p. 29 (Finland); and p. 30 (Canada).

⁵⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-4 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); and pp. 4-6 (Afghanistan).

⁵⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 8 (United Kingdom); p. 10 (United States); p. 11 (Morocco); and p. 17 (France).

⁵⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 8 (United Kingdom); p. 14 (South Africa); and p. 30 (Canada).

⁵⁷³ *Ibid.*, p. 21 (Pakistan).

⁵⁷⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 15.

⁵⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 17.

⁵⁷⁶ [S/PV.6896](#), p.3.

⁵⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

Afghan-led secured regions, which included every provincial capital.⁵⁷⁸

In his statement to the Council on 19 March 2013 the representative of Afghanistan said that by the end of the ongoing fourth tranche of transition 87 per cent of the Afghan population would be living in areas where Afghan security forces were in charge of security. He also welcomed the discussions held in Brussels on 21 and 22 February, at which NATO took steps towards planning improved capabilities and reinforced its commitment to the NATO post-2014 role of training, advising and assisting the Afghan security forces. He also informed the Council on the progress made by Afghanistan in concluding bilateral security partnerships.⁵⁷⁹

On 20 June 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that Afghan security forces had entered the last phase in assuming the lead responsibility for security throughout the country. At the same time, he said that increasingly brutal, complex assaults were being carried out on high-profile targets, aimed at security personnel and terrorizing civilians.⁵⁸⁰ The representative of Afghanistan also noted an escalation in acts of violence in recent weeks, affecting all citizens — men, women and children — as well as international personnel. He added that children were increasingly bearing the brunt of the conflict.⁵⁸¹ Both speakers looked forward to an upcoming conference to assess the progress made on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework.⁵⁸² In the debate that followed, most speakers deplored the increase in civilian casualties.⁵⁸³ The representative of the Russian Federation cautioned that the security situation was deteriorating and that mobilization of armed groups could be seen wherever ISAF had transferred responsibilities to the Afghan forces. He therefore saw no justification for an accelerated transfer of security responsibilities from ISAF to the

Afghan army and police.⁵⁸⁴ The representative of Australia said that the scale of international donor pledges at the 2012 Tokyo Conference illustrated the commitment of the international community to helping Afghanistan achieve a secure, stable and prosperous future, but that the ability of the international community to sustain support for Afghanistan depended upon the Afghan Government delivering on its commitments under the Framework.⁵⁸⁵ Other speakers also made reference to the mutuality of the Framework and urged its full implementation.⁵⁸⁶

In his briefing to the Council on 19 September 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported that the Afghan army and police had shown courage and a growing capability in rising to the challenge of the security transition, increasingly trusting themselves and working to earn the trust of the population, despite heavy casualties in their ranks. He cautioned however that the capabilities of the Afghan security forces were not yet fully developed or completely sustainable and quoted the ISAF Commander, who had recently stated that international support would be required for at least another five years in order to enable entirely independent operations. He welcomed the numerous bilateral partnership agreements underlying the multilateral commitments made at the Chicago Summit. He reported a rise in civilian casualties, with the Taliban movement continuing to assert that anyone associated with the Government or seen to support it constituted a target.⁵⁸⁷ The representative of Afghanistan said that the final phase of the security transition had begun on 18 June and reported on the progress in concluding bilateral security agreements.⁵⁸⁸ The representative of the Russian Federation, while noting the efforts of the Afghan leadership to strengthen the capacity of national security forces, expressed his concern that the conclusion of the transfer of responsibility for security from ISAF to Afghans was taking place against a backdrop of increased subversive extremist activity, including along the northern perimeter of Afghanistan. He called for clear temporal and legal frameworks with

⁵⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 10.

⁵⁷⁹ *S/PV.6935*, pp. 4-5.

⁵⁸⁰ *S/PV.6983*, p. 2.

⁵⁸¹ *Ibid.*, p. 5.

⁵⁸² *Ibid.*, p. 3 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); and p. 6 (Afghanistan).

⁵⁸³ *Ibid.*, p. 7 (Australia, Republic of Korea); p. 9 (China); p. 10 (Azerbaijan); p. 11 (Luxembourg); p. 12 (Morocco); p. 14 (France); p. 15 (Argentina); p. 16 (Rwanda); p. 17 (Guatemala, Togo); p. 18 (Russian Federation); p. 20 (United Kingdom); p. 22 (Turkey); p. 24 (Japan); and p. 26 (Islamic Republic of Iran).

⁵⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 18-19.

⁵⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁵⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 10 (Azerbaijan); p. 16 (Rwanda); p. 20 (United Kingdom); p. 22 (Turkey); p. 24 (Japan); and p. 25 (Italy).

⁵⁸⁷ *S/PV.7035*, pp. 2-4.

⁵⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 4-5.

regard to the format, objectives and legal basis of the remaining military presence in Afghanistan.⁵⁸⁹ On the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General cautioned that a focus on election preparations must not draw attention away from such issues as combating corruption, the rule of law and economic growth.⁵⁹⁰ The representative of Afghanistan said that the senior officials' meeting, held in Kabul in July in follow-up to the Framework, had looked critically into those obligations;⁵⁹¹ that meeting was also welcomed by other speakers.⁵⁹²

In his statement to the Council on 17 December 2013 the representative of Afghanistan informed the Council that the Afghan security forces had assumed full responsibility for security nationwide since June. He also reported that the Loya Jirga had endorsed the bilateral security agreement with the United States, and said that the agreement should be accompanied by assurances for measures to end the military raids on Afghan homes and the launching of negotiations between the High Peace Council and the Taliban. He expressed certainty that the bilateral security agreement would be signed in a timely manner.⁵⁹³ At the same meeting, in his briefing to the Council, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the development agenda would require continuity and progress throughout the transition and reported on preparations for a meeting on the Tokyo Mutual Accountability Framework in January 2014.⁵⁹⁴ Several speakers underlined the importance of the various commitments under the Framework.⁵⁹⁵

Renewal of the mandate of UNAMA

In his briefing to the Council on 20 March 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that during his first meetings with Afghan partners he had perceived a great desire for the continued

presence of UNAMA. He then elaborated on the work of UNAMA in electoral assistance, the promotion of human rights, including the rights of women, peace and reconciliation, and on ensuring a greater coherence of United Nations efforts in all areas.⁵⁹⁶ The representative of Afghanistan expressed his appreciation for the comprehensive review of the Mission's mandated activities, agreeing with the findings in the report of the Secretary-General⁵⁹⁷ on the support of UNAMA to Afghan-led political processes, human rights and aid coherence.⁵⁹⁸

On 22 March 2012, by resolution [2041 \(2012\)](#), the Council extended the mandate of UNAMA until 23 March 2013, in recognition that the renewed mandate took full account of the transition process and was in support of the full assumption by Afghanistan of leadership and ownership in the security, governance and development areas.

In his briefing to the Council on 20 September 2012, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General stated that good offices, regional cooperation and support for elections, peace and reconciliation, advocacy on human rights, including the rights of women and children, development coherence and humanitarian aid were at the very core of the mandate of UNAMA. He added that in the face of budget reductions for 2013 UNAMA would focus on support for the Afghan authorities in the priority areas of its mandate.⁵⁹⁹ Several representatives expressed their concern about the decline in resources allocated to UNAMA.⁶⁰⁰

By resolution [2096 \(2013\)](#), adopted on 19 March 2013, the Council extended the mandate of UNAMA until 19 March 2014, emphasizing the importance of adequate resourcing and laying a focus on coordination and coherence. The mandate included support of the organization of future Afghan elections. In his briefing before the adoption of the resolution, the Secretary-General said that after the significant budget reductions in 2013 no additional reductions for 2014 were envisaged.⁶⁰¹ The representative of Afghanistan welcomed the mandate as reflecting and

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid., p. 7.

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 4.

⁵⁹¹ Ibid., p. 5.

⁵⁹² Ibid., p. 6 (Azerbaijan); and p. 27 (Japan, Germany).

⁵⁹³ [S/PV.7085](#), p. 4.

⁵⁹⁴ Ibid., p. 3.

⁵⁹⁵ Ibid., p. 5 (Afghanistan); p. 6 (Australia); p. 7 (Rwanda); p. 10 (Guatemala); pp. 16-17 (Luxembourg); pp. 17-18 (United Kingdom); p. 23 (Japan); p. 24 (European Union); p. 25 (Canada); and p. 28 (Germany).

⁵⁹⁶ [S/PV.6735](#), pp. 2-4.

⁵⁹⁷ [S/2012/133](#).

⁵⁹⁸ [S/PV.6735](#), p. 6.

⁵⁹⁹ [S/PV.6840](#), pp. 3-4.

⁶⁰⁰ Ibid., p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 14 (South Africa);

p. 18 (France); p. 19 (India); and p. 20 (Pakistan).

⁶⁰¹ [S/PV.6935](#), p. 3.

reinforcing the principles of Afghan ownership and leadership.⁶⁰²

On 17 December 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that, with regard to the role of UNAMA and more broadly of the United Nations in Afghanistan, he foresaw the continued need for an integrated mission streamlined around core areas, namely, good offices in support of Afghan-led processes, leading development coherence among international stakeholders, and human rights monitoring and advocacy, including a particular focus on the rights of women and children, as well as humanitarian assistance.⁶⁰³

Reconciliation and peace process

In his statement to the Council on 20 March 2012 the representative of Afghanistan stated that the dynamics of the peace talks had shifted with the announcement of the opening of the Taliban office in Qatar, which would provide fresh impetus to peace efforts.⁶⁰⁴ Together with the representative of Guatemala, he welcomed measures taken by the Security Council Committee established pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011), which would help reconciliation efforts.⁶⁰⁵

In the debate on 27 June 2012 several speakers welcomed the appointment of Salahuddin Rabbani to lead the High Peace Council.⁶⁰⁶ The representative of France said that the United Nations sanctions regime must continue to be used as a confidence-building measure in intra-Afghan reconciliation, rewarding those who had made the choice of peace and punishing those who wanted to pursue the path of violence.⁶⁰⁷

During a debate on 20 September 2012, several speakers referred to resolution 1988 (2011) as a tool in the peace process.⁶⁰⁸

On 19 December 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and the representative of Afghanistan both reported on the successful visit of the High Peace Council to Pakistan, which had given new momentum to the peace process.⁶⁰⁹ The representative of Afghanistan also looked to the Council to help expedite efforts by meeting Afghan delisting and travel-ban exemption requests for concerned individuals and, in this respect, welcomed relevant provisions of resolution 2082 (2012).⁶¹⁰

At a meeting held on 20 June 2013, several speakers made reference to the recent opening of a Taliban office in Doha, expressing their hope that it would serve to promote peace.⁶¹¹ The representative of Afghanistan said that the opening had been agreed with the United States, under assurances that the sole purpose of the office would be to serve as a venue for direct negotiations between the Taliban and the High Peace Council. The office would not serve as an official representation of the Taliban and would not engage in or support any activity related to terrorism and acts of violence. In his view these conditions had not been met in the recent opening, nor in recent Taliban statements.⁶¹² The representative of the United States recalled that her country supported the opening of the political office in Doha only for the purposes of negotiations between the High Peace Council and the authorized representatives of the Taliban. She was pleased that Qatar had clarified that the name of the office was the “Political Office of the Afghan Taliban” and had had the sign with the incorrect name “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” in front of the door taken down. She stressed that the office must not be treated or represent itself as an embassy or other office representing the Afghan Taliban as an emirate, Government or sovereign entity.⁶¹³ While supporting the approach of the Government of Afghanistan to the establishment and functioning of the Taliban office in Doha, the representative of the Russian Federation called for strict compliance with the sanctions regime of the Security Council, in particular the prohibition of

⁶⁰² Ibid., p. 6.

⁶⁰³ S/PV.7085, p. 3.

⁶⁰⁴ S/PV.6735, p. 6.

⁶⁰⁵ Ibid., p. 6 (Afghanistan); and p. 10 (Guatemala).

⁶⁰⁶ S/PV.6793, p. 4 (Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations); p. 13 (Guatemala); p. 18 (South Africa); p. 19 (Morocco); p. 21 (Azerbaijan); p. 24 (China); p. 26 (Japan); and p. 29 (Turkey).

⁶⁰⁷ Ibid., p. 24.

⁶⁰⁸ S/PV.6840, p. 3 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); p. 5 (Afghanistan); p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 9 (Colombia); and p. 13 (South Africa).

⁶⁰⁹ S/PV.6896, p. 3 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); and p. 5 (Afghanistan).

⁶¹⁰ Ibid., p. 5.

⁶¹¹ S/PV.6983, p. 8 (Republic of Korea); p. 11 (Luxembourg); p. 13 (Pakistan); p. 14 (France); p. 17 (Guatemala); p. 18 (Togo); p. 20 (United Kingdom); and p. 30 (Germany).

⁶¹² Ibid., p. 4.

⁶¹³ Ibid., pp. 8-9.

international visits for those who figured on the sanctions list.⁶¹⁴

In the debate on 19 September 2013 many speakers underlined that the peace process had to be Afghan-led.⁶¹⁵ Some speakers also acknowledged the contribution of Pakistan and other countries in the region to the process.⁶¹⁶

In his statement to the Council on 17 December 2013 the representative of Afghanistan said that his Government was working to renew momentum in the peace process and, in that regard, was involved at the regional level in launching a new phase of dialogue between the leadership in Afghanistan and Pakistan through bilateral and trilateral meetings in London, Kabul and Islamabad.⁶¹⁷ The representative of Pakistan informed the Council of the release of Taliban prisoners, including Mullah Abdullah Ghani Baradar, to facilitate his dialogue with the High Peace Council.⁶¹⁸

Human rights and humanitarian issues

At the meeting on 20 March 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General pointed to the fact that 2011 was the fifth year in a row in which the number of civilian deaths had risen and that, in spite of legal and constitutional protections for women, violence against women and girls remained pervasive in Afghanistan.⁶¹⁹ Several speakers shared this concern and underlined the importance of the promotion and protection of human rights in the transition to Afghan leadership.⁶²⁰

⁶¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 19.

⁶¹⁵ *S/PV.7035*, p. 3 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); p. 6 (Azerbaijan); p. 9 (Luxembourg); p. 10 (Argentina); p. 14 (France); p. 15 (China); p. 16 (Rwanda); p. 18 (United Kingdom); p. 22 (Italy); p. 26 (European Union); p. 27 (Japan); p. 28 (Germany, Turkey); and p. 29 (Slovakia).

⁶¹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 3 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); pp. 11-13 (Pakistan); p. 15 (China); p. 18 (United Kingdom); pp. 22-23 (Italy); p. 27 (Japan); and p. 29 (Slovakia).

⁶¹⁷ *S/PV.7085*, p. 5.

⁶¹⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 13.

⁶¹⁹ *S/PV.6735*, p. 4.

⁶²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6 (Afghanistan); p. 8 (Portugal); p. 10 (South Africa); p. 14 (India); p. 19 (Morocco); p. 27 (European Union); pp. 30-31 (Norway); and p. 31 (Finland).

In his briefing to the Council on 27 June 2012 the Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations made reference to the civilian deaths resulting from an air strike six days prior to the decision taken by ISAF on 12 June to increase restrictions on the use of aerial munitions against civilian dwellings, which he welcomed.⁶²¹ He also recalled that more than 3 million Afghan refugees were registered in Pakistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran and welcomed, in this respect, the solutions strategy for Afghan refugees as it addressed the return and reintegration of Afghan refugees in a comprehensive and sustainable manner.⁶²²

In the debate on 20 September 2012 several speakers underlined the importance of women's rights.⁶²³ Others pointed to the fact that the humanitarian situation was particularly worrisome for women.⁶²⁴ The representative of Portugal called on national authorities and international partners to support implementation of the law on the elimination of violence against women and the national action plan for women in Afghanistan.⁶²⁵ The representative of the United Kingdom said that the Mutual Accountability Framework adopted at Tokyo committed the Government of Afghanistan, *inter alia*, to promote human rights, especially those of women.⁶²⁶

In his briefing on 20 June 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General expressed concern about whether the recent appointment of new human rights commissioners to the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission complied with international principles and standards and met Afghan legal requirements of transparency, broad consultations and selection of independent, qualified individuals. He also cautioned that an erosion of the commitments undertaken by Afghanistan on women's rights, including the law on the elimination of violence against women and its implementation, would have a direct negative impact on future international

⁶²¹ *S/PV.6793*, p. 3.

⁶²² *Ibid.*, p. 2.

⁶²³ *S/PV.6840*, pp. 6-7 (Portugal); p. 7 (Guatemala); p. 11 (United States); p. 17 (France); p. 24 (Germany); p. 27 (European Union); p. 28 (Australia); p. 29 (Finland); and p. 30 (Canada).

⁶²⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 12 (Morocco); p. 14 (South Africa); and p. 20 (China).

⁶²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶²⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

assistance by key international donors.⁶²⁷ In response, the representative of Afghanistan said that the empowerment of women was among his country's proudest achievements, and that Afghanistan was working to protect and promote the human rights of all Afghans, and those of women in particular.⁶²⁸

On 19 September 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General briefed the Council on the meetings of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights with the President of Afghanistan, Hamid Karzai, and senior officials, as well as with civil society representatives and human rights activists in Kabul earlier that week. He reported that the High Commissioner had noted commendable progress in some areas of human rights and the commitment of President Karzai and other key officials. However, the High Commissioner had also stated her concern that the momentum of improvements in human rights might be waning. She had urged additional efforts on the part of the President and the Government to ensure that justice and human rights — in particular women's rights — were preserved and consolidated.⁶²⁹ Similarly, several speakers urged the Government of Afghanistan to step up its efforts in the protection of human rights.⁶³⁰

In the debate on 17 December 2013 the representative of Australia urged Afghanistan to fully implement the law on the elimination of violence against women;⁶³¹ the representative of Luxembourg added that, with regard to that law, impunity seemed to be the rule rather than the exception.⁶³² Several other speakers expressed their concern about the human rights situation in the country.⁶³³

⁶²⁷ S/PV.6983, p. 3.

⁶²⁸ Ibid., p. 6.

⁶²⁹ S/PV.7035, pp. 3-4.

⁶³⁰ Ibid., p. 9 (Luxembourg); p. 11 (Guatemala); p. 15 (Republic of Korea); p. 17 (United States); p. 20 (Togo); p. 21 (Australia); pp. 24-25 (Estonia); p. 26 (European Union); p. 28 (Germany); and p. 30 (Canada).

⁶³¹ S/PV.7085, p. 6.

⁶³² Ibid., p. 16.

⁶³³ Ibid., p. 13 (United States); p. 15 (Togo); p. 18 (Argentina); p. 20 (France); p. 24 (European Union); p. 25 (Canada); and p. 28 (Germany).

The fight against drugs

In his briefing to the Council on 20 March 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that stronger efforts in combating drug production and trafficking were critically important, given the increase in poppy cultivation and opium production and the consequent increased threat to security, stability, development and governance in Afghanistan and the region.⁶³⁴ Other speakers acknowledged the drug problem and its interconnectedness with the security situation and called for efforts to counter it.⁶³⁵ The representative of the Russian Federation called for the eradication of the fields of drug crops and the infrastructure for producing drugs to become a priority for international security forces; he said that the report of the Secretary-General conveyed the impression that there was no problem.⁶³⁶

In his briefing to the Council on 27 June 2012 the Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC) reported on increased opium production in Afghanistan and stated that drug trafficking also undermined the stability of the region. He informed the Council about various initiatives and partnerships that UNODC was supporting. He encouraged Member States to communicate the message that illicit drugs and crime were capable of undermining attempts to promote economic and social development in the country.⁶³⁷ The representative of Afghanistan said that over the past five years poppy cultivation had been significantly reduced and reported an increasing number of successes in eradicating cultivation and bringing drug traffickers to justice. However, cooperation and coordination in preventing the flow of chemical precursors into Afghanistan and providing Afghan farmers with alternative livelihoods was urgent.⁶³⁸ The representative of Germany stated that without progress in governance, development and law enforcement, progress in counter-narcotics efforts would also be limited.⁶³⁹ The representative of the Russian Federation called on the Government of Afghanistan, but also on ISAF, to make the destruction

⁶³⁴ S/PV.6735, p. 3.

⁶³⁵ Ibid., p. 10 (Guatemala); p. 13 (Pakistan); p. 14 (India); p. 17 (Togo); p. 23 (United States); and p. 27 (European Union).

⁶³⁶ Ibid., pp. 21-22.

⁶³⁷ S/PV.6793, pp. 5-6.

⁶³⁸ Ibid., p. 7.

⁶³⁹ Ibid., p. 8.

of poppy fields and infrastructure for the production of drugs a top priority. He also called for making full use of the experience of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in intercepting drug-trafficking and the related financing sources and proposed to forge counter-drug interaction between CSTO and ISAF.⁶⁴⁰ In the debate on 20 June 2013 he reiterated his suggestion for dialogue with CSTO and called for the implementation of the decisions of the Third Ministerial Conference of the Paris Pact Partners on preventing the spread of Afghan narcotics. In his view, an important measure in that regard would be the agreed inclusion of drug traffickers in the sanctions lists of the Security Council.⁶⁴¹

On 19 September 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General conveyed to the Council his concern about assessments that the current year would see a significant rise in opium cultivation and a continuing drop in poppy-free provinces.⁶⁴² The representative of the Russian Federation said that the few successful operations conducted by ISAF to destroy heroin laboratories on the basis of information from their Russian colleagues showed that combined operations could achieve much more; he therefore called for improving bilateral cooperation on Afghanistan between NATO and CSTO, particularly in the area of the fight against drugs.⁶⁴³

In his briefing to the Council on 17 December 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General expressed his concern about a record-setting year of poppy cultivation and production in Afghanistan resulting in some 5,500 tons of opium. He said that this menace threatened the health, security and economic well-being not just of Afghanistan but also of the region and the wider international community.⁶⁴⁴

Preparation of elections

In his briefing to the Council on 20 March 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the majority of his Afghan partners expressed the view that there was a need to strengthen and improve the electoral process in Afghanistan, including through

electoral reform.⁶⁴⁵ Various delegations agreed on the importance of solid electoral institutions and welcomed the engagement of the United Nations in this regard.⁶⁴⁶

In the debate on 20 September 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General said that the conduct of credible presidential elections in 2014 was essential to national unity and legitimacy. He mentioned inclusiveness, a strong and credible Independent Election Commission, as well as clear agreement on a final dispute resolution mechanism as important aspects of electoral preparations.⁶⁴⁷ The representative of Guatemala emphasized the importance of an electoral law and a law on the duties and structure of the Independent Election Commission being adopted in the first quarter of 2013, one year before the elections.⁶⁴⁸

On 19 December 2012 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General reported that the Independent Election Commission had decided to hold the presidential elections on 5 April 2014, while the electoral system, appointments to the management bodies, and a dispute resolution mechanism were being debated. He also informed the Council on the first visit of a United Nations needs assessment mission to realign future electoral assistance.⁶⁴⁹ The representative of Afghanistan added that the draft electoral law was currently under consideration by Parliament.⁶⁵⁰ Several speakers welcomed the announcement of elections and underlined the importance of electoral support by UNAMA.⁶⁵¹

In his briefing to the Council on 19 March 2013 the Secretary-General welcomed the active and responsible participation of all stakeholders in building a widely accepted electoral framework. He also cautioned that agreement on an impartial, credible and independent mechanism, as well as the appointment of

⁶⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 22-23.

⁶⁴¹ *S/PV.6983*, p. 19.

⁶⁴² *S/PV.7035*, p. 3.

⁶⁴³ *Ibid.*, p. 8.

⁶⁴⁴ *S/PV.7085*, p. 3.

⁶⁴⁵ *S/PV.6735*, p. 4.

⁶⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 8 (Germany); p. 9 (Portugal); p. 10 (Guatemala); p. 17 (Togo); p. 26 (European Union); p. 27 (Australia); and p. 30 (Norway).

⁶⁴⁷ *S/PV.6840*, p. 3.

⁶⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 7.

⁶⁴⁹ *S/PV.6896*, p. 2.

⁶⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 6.

⁶⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 7 (Germany); p. 10 (United States); p. 13 (Colombia); p. 14 (United Kingdom); p. 15 (Russian Federation); p. 16 (China); p. 18 (Togo); p. 21 (South Africa); pp. 22-23 (France); pp. 25-26 (European Union); p. 28 (Australia); and p. 29 (Turkey).

a respected, widely accepted chairperson to the Independent Election Commission for electoral dispute resolution would be critical.⁶⁵² Other speakers also emphasized the importance of credible, inclusive and transparent elections.⁶⁵³

On 20 June 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, together with other speakers, urged the adoption of the two major pieces of electoral legislation, namely the electoral law and draft Independent Election Commission law.⁶⁵⁴ The representative of Afghanistan said that both had been adopted by the lower house of Parliament and were currently under consideration by the upper house.⁶⁵⁵

On 19 September 2013 the Special Representative of the Secretary-General noted that the 2014 elections remained at the forefront of political life in Afghanistan, stressing that a stable leadership transition through timely elections was central to achieving all other objectives.⁶⁵⁶ The representative of Afghanistan informed the Council of the election of a chairman of the Independent Election Commission and the appointment of new members of that Commission and the Independent Election Complaints Commission, the arrangement of a national security strategy for elections, and the signing into law of electoral legislation.⁶⁵⁷ These steps were generally welcomed by

several speakers.⁶⁵⁸ However, concern about the security context for the elections was also expressed, against the background of the assassination of the head of the Independent Election Commission office in Kunduz Province.⁶⁵⁹ The representative of the Russian Federation said that the drawdown of the international military presence in Afghanistan bore the risk of further negative developments and could complicate the holding of the presidential elections.⁶⁶⁰

In his statement on 17 December 2013 the representative of Afghanistan informed the Council on progress in the preparations for the presidential and provincial elections: the Independent Election Commission had announced the final list of 11 presidential candidates and their running mates, more than 3 million new voters had registered for the elections, and Afghan national security institutions had put in place a comprehensive strategy to ensure security on election day.⁶⁶¹

Extension of the authorization of ISAF

During the reporting period the Council twice decided to extend the authorization of ISAF, for a period of one year in resolution 2069 (2012) of 9 October 2012, and until 31 December 2014 in resolution 2120 (2013) of 10 October 2013, noting that any new mission should have a sound legal basis as stated in paragraph 14 of the joint Chicago Summit Declaration on Afghanistan.

⁶⁵² S/PV.6935, p. 2.

⁶⁵³ Ibid., p. 8 (United States); p. 14 (Republic of Korea); p. 16 (France); pp. 16-17 (Morocco); p. 19 (Luxembourg); p. 20 (United Kingdom); p. 21 (Guatemala); p. 25 (Denmark); p. 28 (European Union); pp. 28-29 (Canada); and p. 30 (Italy); and S/PV.6935 (Resumption 1), p. 3 (Spain, Germany); p. 4 (Slovakia); p. 6 (Estonia); p. 7 (Turkey); p. 10 (Lithuania); and p. 11 (Kyrgyzstan);

⁶⁵⁴ S/PV.6983, p. 2 (Special Representative of the Secretary-General); p. 6 (Australia); p. 8 (United States); p. 11 (Luxembourg); p. 14 (France); p. 16 (Guatemala); p. 20 (United Kingdom); p. 23 (European Union); p. 29 (Canada); and p. 30 (Germany).

⁶⁵⁵ Ibid., p. 5.

⁶⁵⁶ S/PV.7035, p. 2.

⁶⁵⁷ Ibid, p. 5.

⁶⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 6 (Azerbaijan); p. 9 (Luxembourg);

p. 11 (Guatemala); p. 13 (France); p. 14 (Republic of Korea); p. 15 (China); p. 16 (Rwanda); p. 17 (United States); p. 18 (United Kingdom); p. 19 (Morocco); p. 20 (Togo); p. 21 (Australia); p. 22 (Italy); p. 24 (Estonia); p. 25 (European Union); p. 26 (Japan); pp. 27-28 (Germany); and p. 30 (Canada).

⁶⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 5 (Afghanistan); p. 9 (Luxembourg); p. 14 (Republic of Korea); p. 16 (Rwanda); p. 20 (Togo); p. 27 (Japan); and p. 28 (Germany).

⁶⁶⁰ Ibid., p. 7.

⁶⁶¹ S/PV.7085, pp. 4-5.

Meetings: the situation in Afghanistan

| <i>Meeting record and date</i> | <i>Sub-item</i> | <i>Other documents</i> | <i>Rule 37 invitations</i> | <i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i> | <i>Speakers</i> | <i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i> |
|--|--|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| S/PV.6735 20 March 2012 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/133) | | Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Norway, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations | All Council members, all invitees | |
| S/PV.6738 22 March 2012 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/133) | Draft resolution submitted by Germany (S/2012/170) | Afghanistan | | | Resolution 2041 (2012) (15-0-0) |
| S/PV.6793 27 June 2012 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/462) | | Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Latvia, New Zealand, Turkey | Under-Secretary-General for Peacekeeping Operations, Executive Director of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, Head of the Delegation of the European Union, Assistant Secretary-General for Operations of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization | All Council members, all invitees | |

| <i>Meeting record and date</i> | <i>Sub-item</i> | <i>Other documents</i> | <i>Rule 37 invitations</i> | <i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i> | <i>Speakers</i> | <i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i> |
|--|--|---|---|---|--|---|
| S/PV.6840 20 September 2012 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/703) | | Afghanistan, Australia, Canada, Finland, Japan, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Head of the Delegation of the European Union | All Council members, all invitees ^a | |
| S/PV.6843 9 October 2012 | | Draft resolution submitted by Germany (S/2012/742), Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/703) | | | Togo | Resolution 2069 (2012) (15-0-0) |
| S/PV.6896 19 December 2012 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2012/907) | | Afghanistan, Australia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Head of the Delegation of the European Union | All Council members, all invitees | |

| <i>Meeting record and date</i> | <i>Sub-item</i> | <i>Other documents</i> | <i>Rule 37 invitations</i> | <i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i> | <i>Speakers</i> | <i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i> |
|---|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| S/PV.6935 and S/PV.6935 (Resumption 1) 19 March 2013 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/133) | Draft resolution submitted by Australia (S/2013/164) | Afghanistan, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, India, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lithuania, Slovakia, Spain, Turkey, Ukraine | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Special Representative of the European Union for Afghanistan | Secretary-General, all Council members, ^b Special Representative of the European Union for Afghanistan | Resolution 2096 (2013) (15-0-0) |
| S/PV.6983 20 June 2013 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/350) | | Afghanistan, Canada, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Latvia, Spain, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Deputy Head of the Delegation of the European Union | All Council members, all invitees | |
| S/PV.7035 19 September 2013 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/535) | | Afghanistan, Canada, Estonia, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Italy, Japan, Slovakia, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Special Representative of the European Union for Afghanistan | All Council members, all invitees | |
| S/PV.7041 10 October 2013 | | Draft resolution submitted by Australia (S/2013/599) Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/535) | Afghanistan | | | Resolution 2120 (2013) (15-0-0) |

| <i>Meeting record and date</i> | <i>Sub-item</i> | <i>Other documents</i> | <i>Rule 37 invitations</i> | <i>Rule 39 and other invitations</i> | <i>Speakers</i> | <i>Decision and vote (for-against-abstaining)</i> |
|--------------------------------|--|------------------------|--|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| S/PV.7085 17 December 2013 | Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2013/721) | | Afghanistan, Canada, Germany, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Japan, Turkey | Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of UNAMA, Head of the Delegation of the European Union | All Council members, all invitees | |

^a Afghanistan was represented by its Minister for Foreign Affairs.

^b Australia, Denmark and Finland were represented at the ministerial level.

Europe

20. The situation in Cyprus

Overview

During the period under review, the Security Council held six meetings, including three closed meetings with the troop-contributing countries,⁶⁶² and adopted three resolutions on the situation in Cyprus. The Council in its deliberations focused on the various political developments in Cyprus, including the relevant role and mandate of the United Nations Peacekeeping Force in Cyprus (UNFICYP).⁶⁶³ In addition, the Council continued to support the good offices mission of the Secretary-General and his efforts to assist the parties in the negotiation process, and encouraged both sides to continue to work with UNFICYP to reach a comprehensive settlement.

The Council further extended the mandate of UNFICYP three times,⁶⁶⁴ in accordance with the recommendations contained in the reports of the Secretary-General.⁶⁶⁵

Extension of the mandate of UNFICYP

On 19 July 2012, the Council adopted resolution 2058 (2012), in which it noted that the progress made so far in negotiations was not sufficient, urged the sides to continue their discussions to reach decisive progress on the core issues, expressed its full support for UNFICYP and extended its mandate for a further period until 31 January 2013.

After the vote, the representative of Azerbaijan noted that his country had abstained from voting on the resolution, because in his view the resolution did not place the required emphasis on the necessity to agree

on a results-oriented process.⁶⁶⁶ The representative of Pakistan expressed his dissatisfaction over the lack of inclusiveness in engaging all Council members to achieve consensus, and also pointed out that the text was not fully reflective of the recommendations of the Secretary-General.⁶⁶⁷

On 24 January 2013, the Council, in resolution 2089 (2013), extended the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period ending 31 July 2013. After the vote, the representative of Azerbaijan noted that his country had abstained from voting because the resolution contained a number of elements that were “outdated”, as well as “factual inaccuracies”. Furthermore, he expressed concern that a number of issues raised in the report of the Secretary-General⁶⁶⁸ were not reflected in the resolution.⁶⁶⁹

On 30 July 2013, the Council adopted resolution 2114 (2013), in which it extended the mandate of UNFICYP for a further period ending 31 January 2014. After the vote, the representative of Pakistan stated that the deletion of a reference to joint statements, including those of 23 May and July 2008, had constrained his country to abstain in the voting on the draft resolution.⁶⁷⁰ The representative of Azerbaijan also stated the reasons for his country’s abstention in voting. He said that the resolution did not provide a full and proper update of the situation and had not placed the required emphasis on the necessity to agree on a results-oriented process. He maintained that certain provisions in the resolution did not accurately describe some of the developments on the ground.⁶⁷¹

⁶⁶² See [S/PV.6801](#), [S/PV.6901](#) and [S/PV.6997](#).

⁶⁶³ For more information on the mandate of UNFICYP, see part X, sect. I, “Peacekeeping operations”.

⁶⁶⁴ See resolutions [2058 \(2012\)](#), [2089 \(2013\)](#) and [2114 \(2013\)](#).

⁶⁶⁵ [S/2012/507](#), [S/2013/7](#) and [S/2013/392](#).

⁶⁶⁶ [S/PV.6809](#), p. 2.

⁶⁶⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 2-3.

⁶⁶⁸ [S/2013/7](#).

⁶⁶⁹ [S/PV.6908](#), p. 2.

⁶⁷⁰ [S/PV.7014](#), p. 2.

⁶⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 3.