

Statement by Ambassador Hardeep Singh Puri, Permanent Representative, at the UN Security Council debate on UNAMA, New York, 27 June 2012

Thank you, Mr. President.

I join others in thanking you, Mr. President, for scheduling today's debate on the situation in Afghanistan. I would like to thank, in particular, Ambassador Zahir Tanin, PR of Afghanistan, for his statement. We also thank the UN Secretary General for his latest report and are appreciative of the briefings by Mr. Herve Ladsous, Under Secretary General, and UNODC Executive Director Yuri Fedetov.

Mr. President,

2. India shares a privileged, historical and civilizational relationship with Afghanistan. During the last decade, our relationship has been renewed and consolidated by our contribution to the rebuilding and reconstruction of Afghanistan. India has pledged up to US \$ 2 billion in development and humanitarian assistance. We remain unwavering in our commitment to assisting the people of Afghanistan in their endeavour to build a peaceful, stable, democratic and prosperous nation.

3. With the first meeting of the India-Afghanistan Partnership Council in New Delhi in May 2012, the process of implementation of the India-Afghanistan Comprehensive Strategic [Partnership Agreement](#) has been set in motion. This process will further intensify our broad-based development assistance to Afghanistan in a wide range of sectors, which have been identified by the government of Afghanistan as priority areas for reconstruction and development. We will [continue](#) our engagement in reconstruction and rehabilitation projects in alignment with the Afghan National Development Strategy.

4. We are fully cognizant that the economic viability of Afghanistan depends on its fuller integration into its neighbourhood, so that it can regain its historical role as a land-bridge between South Asia, Central Asia, the Middle East and Eurasia.

5. We fully support the efforts for regional confidence-building as a critical component of international efforts to support Afghanistan as it takes forward the task of national reconciliation even while it assumes full responsibility for security.

6. India fully supports an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned inclusive and transparent process of reconciliation as opposed to an internationally led process, accompanied by an inclusive political process and intra-Afghan dialogue, renunciation of violence, cutting of ties to terrorist groups, abiding by the Afghan constitution with its protections for human rights, including the rights of women.

7. At the Kabul Ministerial Meeting of the Istanbul process, India expressed its willingness to take the lead in the implementation of two Confidence Building Measures (CBMs), “Chambers of Commerce CBM” and “Commercial Opportunities CBM”. Further, India will be hosting the Delhi Investment Summit on Afghanistan in New Delhi tomorrow i.e. 28 June. The objective of this Summit is to attract foreign investment into Afghanistan in the light of new opportunities opening up in various sectors in that country. The Summit will include presentations by the Government of Afghanistan and others on the investment climate and opportunities in Afghanistan and panel discussions on cross-cutting issues as well as sector specific themes. Potential regional and international investors, including Indian companies, will participate in the event.

8. We see the Delhi Investment Summit as a critical link between the Istanbul Process and the Tokyo Conference on 8 July. The Summit will also be helpful in countering the current narrative of anxiety of withdrawal and in reversing it with a narrative of opportunity and hope.

9. We are doing so while fully cognizant that these CBMs require an atmosphere of security in the country and in the region. Amidst the ongoing transition, the security gains achieved during the last decade in Afghanistan are still tenuous and fragile. The security concerns continue to remain paramount.

10. The principal problem in Afghanistan remains the existence of terrorism, drawing upon ideological, financial and logistical support from beyond Afghanistan's borders. We need concerted action to isolate and root out the syndicate of terrorism which includes elements of the Al-Qaida, Taliban, Lashkar-e-Taiba and other terrorist and extremist groups.

11. We also need to create an enabling environment where the Afghan people can live in peace and security and decide their future themselves, without outside interference, coercion and intimidation.

Mr. President,

12. Moving forward, we need sustained international commitment to strengthen the Afghan government's capacity for governance, security and economic development. Enhanced developmental assistance and foreign investments in Afghanistan and building regional linkages are critical in ensuring an irreversible transition in that country.

13. The Secretary General's latest report rightly observes that the serious challenges confronting Afghanistan 'must not, however, be under-played, with the military drawdown and an unexpected reduction in development assistance giving rise to uncertainty about the sustainability of such gains'.

14. We support the good work being done by UNAMA. The international community as a whole must continue to work together with renewed vigour and unity of purpose towards strengthening the efforts of the Afghan government in seeking solutions that are inclusive and led by the Afghan people themselves.

I thank you.

BACK TO SECURITY COUNCIL