



# Security Council

Sixtieth year

*Provisional*

## 5145<sup>th</sup> meeting

Tuesday, 22 March 2005, 10 a.m.

New York

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<i>President:</i>	Mr. Sardenberg . . . . .	(Brazil)
<i>Members:</i>	Algeria . . . . .	Mr. Benmehidi
	Argentina . . . . .	Mr. Mayoral
	Benin . . . . .	Mr. Zinsou
	China . . . . .	Mr. Wang Guangya
	Denmark . . . . .	Mr. Faaborg-Andersen
	France . . . . .	Mr. De La Sablière
	Greece . . . . .	Mr. Vassilakis
	Japan . . . . .	Mr. Ozawa
	Philippines . . . . .	Mr. Baja
	Romania . . . . .	Mr. Dumitru
	Russian Federation . . . . .	Mr. Denisov
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland . . . . .	Sir Emyr Jones Parry
	United Republic of Tanzania . . . . .	Mr. Mahiga
	United States of America . . . . .	Mrs. Patterson

## Agenda

### The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2005/183)

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*The meeting was called to order at 10.15 a.m.*

### **Adoption of the agenda**

*The agenda was adopted.*

### **The situation in Afghanistan**

#### **Report of the Secretary-General on the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security (S/2005/183)**

**The President:** I should like to inform the Council that I have received a letter from the representative of Afghanistan, in which he requests to be invited to participate in the consideration of the item on the Council's agenda. In conformity with the usual practice, I propose, with the consent of the Council, to invite that representative 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. Farhâdi (Afghanistan) took a seat at the Council table.*

**The President:** In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, and in the absence of objection, I shall take it that the Security Council agrees to extend an invitation under rule 39 of its provisional rules of procedure to Mr. Jean Arnault, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

There being no objection, it is so decided.

I invite Mr. Arnault to take a seat at the Council table.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda. The Council is meeting in accordance with the understanding reached in its prior consultations.

Members of the Council have before them the report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, document S/2005/183.

At this meeting, the Security Council will hear a briefing by Mr. Jean Arnault, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the

United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, on whom I now call.

**Mr. Arnault:** I am grateful for this new opportunity to brief the Council on the occasion of its consideration of the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA).

The Council has before it the report of the Secretary-General (S/2005/183), which describes in some detail the recent developments in Afghanistan. Since the report was drafted, few new developments have taken place, with the notable exception of the announcement, last Sunday, by the electoral authorities of the date of the parliamentary and province-level elections, namely, 18 September 2005. That was not initially our preferred time frame. As I mentioned in my last briefing to the Council, on 10 January, we would have liked to have been able to uphold last July's decision by the Joint Electoral Management Body to hold elections this spring. However, the choice of the electoral system made last month ruled out that option entirely, making mid-September, from an operational viewpoint, the earliest possible date.

Indeed, under the circumstances, the timelines do not provide any breathing space. It is anticipated that several thousand candidates will participate in the elections for the 249 positions in the lower house and for the provincial councils. That will, in particular, make the vetting of those candidates in order to check their eligibility under the electoral law a very complex and lengthy exercise. Similarly, the anticipated very large number of candidates compelled the electoral authorities to allow for a considerable period of time for the design, production and distribution of ballot papers.

In addition, I must acknowledge that the holding of the elections four months later than initially anticipated is not without several advantages. First, it means that the electoral campaign and the election itself will take place well after the completion of this year's poppy eradication campaign. A thorough counter-narcotics exercise in the most affected provinces will, hopefully, diminish the impact of drug money on the electoral process and, certainly, deconflicting eradication and the electoral campaign will have a positive influence on the security environment for the election.

An election in September will also allow for more in-depth civic education of the public, of the candidates and of the parties alike, which, in turn, will no doubt enhance the magnitude and the quality of participation. It will also make it possible to put more and better trained army and police units at the disposal of the electoral process. It will give more time to complete the process of demilitarization that has gained, as members know, much momentum in recent months.

UNAMA and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission will soon resume their joint reporting on the exercise of political rights during the political process, which last year proved to be a useful tool for ascertaining the political environment of the electoral process and for taking corrective action when necessary.

Last but not least, a September time frame will afford more time to prepare for the establishment of the future National Assembly. With France in the lead, and with support from the United Nations Development Programme, work has already begun to train over 100 staff members with expertise in different aspects of the legislative process and administrative support for Parliament. A conference is scheduled to take place next week in Paris to raise further funding for that important project.

On the issue of funding, I must take this opportunity to update the donor community on the financial requirements for the holding of the parliamentary elections, which are not insignificant. The total budget needed is \$148.67 million. Savings from last year's registration and elections amount to \$16 million. New contributions have so far been received from the Netherlands, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States for a total amount of \$24.38 million, which means that about \$110 million are still required, and I should be grateful for the Security Council's support in urging donors to respond generously and in a timely manner.

As can be gathered from what I have said, the preparation of the parliamentary election, like the preparation of the presidential election before it, offers an opportunity not only to complete the political transition provided under the Bonn agreement, but also to drive progress in several other key areas of concern, such as security, the rebuilding of Afghan institutions, disarmament and the observance of human rights. We

are keen to take maximum advantage of that opportunity.

With regard to security, the two roadside bombs that killed six and injured 31 last Wednesday in Kandahar were a reminder that, while the security situation overall has improved since the presidential election last October, complacency is not in order, particularly for the United Nations, since the two attacks were directed at convoys of the United Nations Office for Project Services and the World Food Programme. Protecting the life of United Nations staff will remain a priority for us, with the benefit of the strengthened security arrangements that have been put in place since last year.

It is hoped that a new initiative, entitled "Consolidation of Peace" and aimed at allowing a number of rank and file Taliban and other fighters from extremist organizations to disarm and resettle in their communities, can make a contribution to the reduction of violence this year. Mr. Mujaddedi — former President and Chairman of the Constitutional Loya Jirga — has just been appointed to head a national commission to oversee the programme. It provides for low- and mid-level fighters to enter a reconciliation process under the responsibility of the provincial governors and community leaders. It does not offer, however, unconditional amnesty and does not apply to the worst offenders among Taliban commanders and other senior leaders from extremist groups, whose capture and prosecution will remain a priority for international forces and domestic security agencies. For individuals whose status deserves special measures, reintegration will take place under close monitoring by security agencies.

The design of the programme did raise some misgivings in the past, including that it was tantamount to selective national reconciliation or that it would provide a cover for the resuscitation of the Taliban as a political force. With the current structure of the national reconciliation programme and with the oversight of the national commission headed by Mr. Mujaddedi, I hope that those misgivings will be allayed, and UNAMA field offices stand ready to assist if need be.

The agenda of the next nine months is a heavy one. It will place demands on all the human and material resources of the United Nations in Afghanistan, including those of UNAMA. The

Secretary-General's reports submitted to the Security Council this year have outlined the contributions of UNAMA and the United Nations family to the Bonn process in the political, institutional, humanitarian, human rights, economic and social areas. A summary description of the structure, objective, expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement of the Mission for 2005 is also contained in the Secretary-General's report of 23 November 2004 on estimates in respect of special political missions, good offices and other political initiatives authorized by the General Assembly and the Security Council. I hope that, on this basis, the Council will concur with the recommendation of the Secretary-General to extend the mandate of the Mission with its current structure.

For my part, I would like to take this opportunity to express our gratitude to the Council for the confidence that it has placed in the Mission during the past 12 months. This has been a very intense, challenging and often difficult period, when sensitive and controversial matters were decided. The knowledge that the authority of the Security Council was behind the work of the Mission has been a source of motivation and encouragement for all of us. I can assure the Council that the staff of UNAMA will continue to do everything in their power to fulfil faithfully the mandate that it has chosen to entrust to them.

Before I conclude, let me say a few words about an issue which the Security Council has retained on our agenda since last year: the mandate of UNAMA once the electoral process is completed. As we prepared this year's budget, we began to discuss internally a variety of options, ranging from maintaining UNAMA in its current structure to returning to the regular operation of a United Nations country team. It is clear, however, that, as mentioned in the Secretary-General's report, that discussion cannot be separated from the broader

issue of the way in which the international community and the Afghan Government will organize their cooperation in years to come, taking into account, on the one hand, the anticipated successful completion of the political transition and, on the other, the obvious need for a continued strong compact between Afghanistan and the international community if the gains of the past three years are to be sustained. The features of that compact will certainly come into sharper focus as the Government of Afghanistan and the aid community discuss their aid programmes for the coming years. In that respect, the Afghan Development Forum from 4 to 6 April in Kabul will be an opportunity to comment on those issues.

For our part, we are very keen to make sure that future international cooperation should not only take careful account of the lessons learned from the past three years of State-building in Afghanistan, but also benefit from the large pool of accumulated international experience — sometimes good, sometimes less good — with regard to peacebuilding in post-conflict countries. Our own deadlines for the formulation of UNAMA's budget for next year make it necessary that the issue of UNAMA's role in 2006 and beyond be resolved by this summer. We plan, therefore, to hold intensive consultations with the Afghan Government, the Security Council and the international community at large in the weeks to come, and hope to be able to report to the Council before too long with proposals that will encapsulate the best options for effective United Nations support to the further consolidation of peace in Afghanistan.

**The President:** In accordance with the understanding reached in the Council's prior consultations, I should now like to invite Council members to informal consultations to continue our discussion on the subject.

*The meeting rose at 10.30 a.m.*