

## **Minister Spanta addresses U.N. Security Council**

**Mr. President,**

I would like to express my warmest regards and gratitude for convening this important meeting that demonstrates the commitment of the international community towards a democratic, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. I would also like to welcome Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi with whom I had a productive meeting this morning.

I welcome the Secretary-General's special report pursuant to Security Council Resolution 1806 (2008) on the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan.

**Mr. President,**

Precisely ten minutes after the terrorist attack on the embassy of India in Kabul, on Monday, 7 July, I witnessed the bloodied scene of the attack which resulted in killing of women and children, Indian Diplomats and security personnel as well as the injuries of dozens of innocent civilians. I am still overwhelmed by this brutal and cold-blooded act of terrorism. Afghanistan condemns this heinous act of terrorism in the strongest terms possible and sympathizes with those who lost their lives and we share the grief of the families of the victims.

This is neither the first nor the last in the succession of increasingly brutal attacks that targeted the people of Afghanistan, the region, and the world. We have witnessed the spike of terrorist acts in recent months including the assassination attempt on President Karzai, the Kandahar jail-break, and a drastic increase in the loss of international forces. Those who are behind the Taliban and Al-Qaeda have enhanced their support, increased the scope and pace of terrorist activities, and shifted their focus towards Afghanistan as a part of their psychological war to sabotage the peace process in our country, and affect the regional and global public opinion. One of the main factors contributing to the deterioration of the security situation in the country is the de facto truce in the tribal areas beyond the border.

**Mr. President,**

The terrorist enemy we face is sustained by a complex set of networks and infrastructure and therefore cannot be defeated by military operations inside Afghanistan alone. Terrorist sanctuaries and an elaborate system of financing, recruiting, arming and systematic training of suicide bombers are at work outside our borders, to keep the terrorist threat alive. It is clear that we cannot defeat terrorism unless we address its root causes. The success against terrorism will be achieved only by a coherent, integrated, regional and global approach.

The Afghan security forces alongside their allies from ISAF-NATO and the international coalition against terrorism are carrying the brunt of this effort, acting as the brave foot-soldiers of the free world in this critical battlefield. They are fighting an enemy that is

also transnational in composition and international in focus, based specifically outside our border.

**Mr. President,**

We welcome the results of the elections of Pakistan and the path the people of Pakistan have chosen towards democracy and the establishment of a civilian government. The people of Pakistan have said no to terrorism. We support the democratic process and welcome the expansion of our friendly relations with the civilian government of Pakistan. It is clear that international terrorist networks constitute a common threat to Afghanistan and Pakistan, and it is our firm belief that we need a joint, coherent and integrated approach by both governments to eliminate their bases.

**Mr. President,**

Cognizant of the duty of the Government of Afghanistan to ensure security for its citizens throughout the country, we wish to take more responsibilities with the support of the international community. In this respect, President Karzai declared that we will assume the responsibility of security of Kabul in August. Our aim is to take more responsibility gradually, but this requires an acceleration of training and equipping of our national army and security forces, to enable them to carry out these duties.

**Mr. President,**

The situation will not be improved without equal focus on interrelated issues such as narcotics, corruption and poverty which undermine our goals and breed insecurity and instability. The Government of Afghanistan is resolute to combat corruption and take concrete steps to that effect. Last Sunday, our Cabinet has agreed on the mandates and responsibilities of the anti-corruption monitoring commission. We will establish special police force, special courts, and new attorney offices specifically designed for the fight against corruption.

**Mr. President,**

Our comprehensive counter-narcotics strategy takes into account all security, international, social and economic aspects of the problem. Success in this fight mainly depends on improving good governance, creating alternative livelihoods for farmers and the realization of a coordinated rural development policy.

Last year, we have taken considerable steps in the fight against narcotics and poppy cultivation. Production was considerably reduced in 23 out of 34 provinces, and the number of poppy-free provinces increased to 16. In Helmand province, where we still face high poppy cultivation and security challenges, the nexus between narcotics and terrorism is evident.

**Mr. President,**

The Paris Conference in support of Afghanistan is a landmark success for the Government of Afghanistan and the international community to renew their efforts in a view to assist the Afghan people and Government in the peace and reconstruction process. On behalf of the Government and people of Afghanistan, I express my appreciation for their political and financial commitment to the vision of a democratic, secure and prosperous Afghanistan.

The Afghanistan National Development Strategy (ANDS) and the outstanding financial commitment of 21 billion dollars pledged for the implementation of this strategy has provided the opportunity to endorse a common roadmap aimed at achieving the objectives agreed in the Afghanistan Compact and the Millennium Development Goals.

The Government of Afghanistan needs to ensure a successful implementation of ANDS by completing the prioritization, and the programming of the strategy, as well as designing the adequate implementation framework. We urge the international community to provide predictable, transparent and accountable assistance and particularly the need to channel their development assistance in a more coordinated way through our national budget. This will strengthen the capacity the Government of Afghanistan and enable us to align our resources to the requirements of the ANDS.

**Mr. President,**

We value the coordinating role of UNAMA, particularly its focus in improving aid effectiveness and adjustments to coordination mechanisms in order to make them more efficient and delivery-oriented. I would like to stress that Ambassador Kai Eide, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General has the support and full trust of President Karzai, as well as the Government and People of Afghanistan. We support the efforts of the Secretary-General and his Special-Representative in strengthening UNAMA as reflected in the Secretary-General's report.

I would also like to thank the United Nations and the donor and international community for their financial and technical support as well as continuation of their humanitarian assistance. The new food appeal made by the Government of Afghanistan and the international community requires serious attention, particularly at a time of increased food insecurity and vulnerability due to the effects of drought this year. We are thankful to Mr. John Holmes for his personal involvement in this issue and his participation in today's discussion.

**Mr. President,**

For the first time in our contemporary history, Afghan citizens have chosen their own model of governance and social, political, and economic development. We are preparing for the presidential and parliamentary elections in Afghanistan in 2009 and

2010. The participation of all Afghans in these elections is essential to consolidate democracy and enable Afghans to shape their own future.

We seek the support and cooperation of the international community to prepare the ground for free, fair and secure elections. Last but not least, the Government of Afghanistan and the Afghan People sincerely honor and remember the dedication and sacrifice of the men and women of the international community in the War against Terrorism. Once again I would like to express my sincere appreciation for participating in this meeting.

Thank you Mr. President.