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GENERAL ASSEMBLY
Forty-second session
Items 31, 73, 131, 136 and 140 of
the preliminary list*
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS
IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE
AND SECURITY
REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE
DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF
INTERNATIONAL SECURITY
PEACEFUL SETTLEMENT OF DISPUTES BETWEEN
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REPORT OF THE AD HOC COMMITTEE ON THE
DRAFTING OF AN INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
AGAINST THE RECRUITMENT, USE, FINANCING
AND TRAINING OF MERCENARIES
DEVELOPMENT AND STRENGTHENING OF
GOOD-NEIGHBOURLINESS BETWEEN STATES

SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-second year

Letter dated 8 April 1987 from the Permanent Representative
of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the
Secretary-General

Further to our letter of 2 March 1987 (A/42/161-S/18734), I have the honour to draw your attention to the message of 26 March 1987 addressed to you by Mr. Abdul Wakil (see A/42/187-S/18763, annex), making baseless allegations that Pakistan has used intimidation and other measures to prevent the Afghan refugees from returning to Afghanistan. Pakistan rejects these unfounded allegations and condemns the frequent abuse of the United Nations forum by the Kabul authorities for making false propaganda.

* A/42/50.

More than three million Afghan refugees, representing the world's largest concentration of refugees, have sought shelter in Pakistan. These refugees, who constitute a substantial portion of the Afghan population, have not left their homeland at the instigation or invitation of Pakistan. They have been forced to flee their homes because of persecution and the intolerable conditions created by the seven-year-old foreign military occupation of Afghanistan.

The international community, which firmly opposed the occupation of Afghanistan, has repeatedly called for the immediate withdrawal of the foreign troops from that country. The international community has also expressed its sympathy with the millions of uprooted Afghans, mobilized resources with a view to alleviating their hardships, and called for the creation of conditions under which they could return to their homes in safety and honour.

Pakistan would like to see the earliest return of the Afghan refugees to their homes in safety because their presence is an enormous responsibility and a huge burden on its limited resources. They are free to return whenever they so desire; but Pakistan cannot push them into Afghanistan against their will. The established humanitarian obligations forbid Pakistan to take such action.

It is easy to understand why the Afghan refugees who have fled from their land, on account of persecution and foreign military intervention, are not willing to go back to their country until the realization of a settlement ensuring the early withdrawal of foreign troops, bringing this intervention to an end, and creating conditions for the safe and voluntary return of the refugees. In the absence of such a settlement, these refugees find little encouragement to return to Afghanistan. The pronouncements of a régime, sustained by foreign troops inspires little confidence among them.

The fact that seven to eight thousand Afghan nationals are still pouring into Pakistan every month is a resounding refutation of the charge that Pakistan is preventing the Afghan refugees from returning to their country. Even inside Pakistan, these refugees have become the victims of ruthless air attacks by Afghan military aircraft, as a result of which hundreds are killed and many more injured. Kabul cannot deceive the international community by protestations when its military aircraft continue to bomb refugee camps inflicting death and devastation on this uprooted mass of humanity.

Several international organizations, as well as the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, are fully engaged in efforts to provide relief assistance to the Afghan refugees in 325 refugee tent villages all over the northern region of Pakistan bordering Afghanistan. The representatives of these international organizations are on the spot and are in contact with the refugee population on a daily basis. They would know the feelings of the Afghan refugees. I will reiterate the offer made in our letter addressed to you and circulated in document A/42/161-S/18734, that the United Nations and its agencies can ascertain for themselves whether the refugees desire to return to their country under the prevailing circumstances. In this context, we will also welcome Mr. Felix Ermacora, Special Rapporteur of the United Nations Human Rights Commission

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on the Situation in Afghanistan, to investigate this matter for presentation as part of his comprehensive report on the human rights situation in Afghanistan.

I request that you have this letter circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under items 31, 73, 131, 136 and 140 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) S. SHAH NAWAZ
Ambassador and Permanent Representative
