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Items 31, 73, 131, 136 and 140 of the
preliminary list*

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SECURITY COUNCIL
Forty-second year

Letter dated 4 May 1987 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the
Permanent Mission of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed
to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to draw your attention to document A/42/240-S/18823 dated 24 April 1987, circulating a letter addressed to you by the Kabul representative. The allegations made against Pakistan in this communication represent baseless propaganda and an unfortunate misuse of the United Nations forum.

It is regrettable that the representative of the Kabul régime has again tried to obfuscate the reality of the unmitigated sufferings imposed on the Afghan people by the continuing foreign military occupation of their country. In making false accusations against Pakistan, the Kabul régime harbours the illusion that it can

* A/42/50.

detract attention from the death and destruction being wrought in Afghanistan. The international community, which has clearly and repeatedly pronounced its views on the situation in Afghanistan, cannot be deceived by pious declarations of intent while the massacre and the painful exodus of the Afghan people continue. By injecting extraneous issues the Kabul régime is deluding no one but itself.

As already conveyed in our letters of 2 March 1987 (A/42/161-S/18734) and of 8 April 1987 (A/42/215-S/18789), addressed to you, my Government has categorically stated that over three million Afghan refugees, who have sought shelter in Pakistan to escape the brutal oppression resulting from the foreign military occupation of their country, are free to return to their homes whenever they so desire. We would welcome their voluntary return, but we will not use coercion to push them back against their will to become again the victims of the repression which in the first place forced them to seek refuge outside their homeland.

It is understandable why these millions of Afghan refugees are willing to undergo the rigours of exile rather than return to Afghanistan. The conditions which forced them to flee their homes, in particular, the foreign military occupation of their country, still persist. Once these conditions are changed by a settlement based on the withdrawal of the foreign troops, the refugees will have no incentive to continue their stay in Pakistan.

Meanwhile, Pakistan continues to receive an influx of Afghan refugees. In fact, last month witnessed a sudden increase because a few thousand refugees trekked all the way to Pakistan to escape the ruthless military reprisals carried out in the northern provinces of Afghanistan during March and early April this year.

Pakistan has never spoken nor does it intend to speak on behalf of the Afghan refugees. The only considerations which have guided its actions over the past seven years to extend relief and succour to the refugees are purely humanitarian in character. In this endeavour, the international community itself, recognizing the immensity of the tragedy, has worked hand in hand with the Pakistani authorities to provide valuable assistance to alleviate the sufferings of the Afghan refugees. To expose the Kabul régime's propaganda my Government had earlier proposed that the United Nations agencies, including UNHCR, which is in daily contact with the refugees in 325 refugees tentage villages in Pakistan, could ascertain from the refugees whether they wished to return to their homes under the present circumstances. Such a survey will directly convey to the United Nations the true feelings of the Afghan refugees on the question of their return under the present circumstances, as also on the foreign military occupation of their country.

I request you to 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.

(Muhammad Nasser Mian)
Acting Permanent Representative
