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GENERAL ASSEMBLY  
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Item 30 of the preliminary list\*  
THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS  
IMPLICATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL  
PEACE AND SECURITY

SECURITY COUNCIL  
Forty-third year

Letter dated 14 April 1988 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of  
the Permanent Mission of the United Kingdom of Great Britain  
and Northern Ireland to the United Nations addressed to the  
Secretary-General

I have the honour to enclose a copy of a statement on Afghanistan issued on 14 April by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs, the Right Honourable Sir Geoffrey Howe QC, MP.

I should be grateful if you could arrange to have the statement circulated as a document of the General Assembly, under item 30 of the preliminary list, and of the Security Council.

(Signed) John BIRCH

\* A/43/50.

ANNEX

Afghanistan: Statement issued on 14 April 1988 by the Secretary of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland

I welcome the Geneva agreement and the Soviet Union's decision to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan. I congratulate the United Nations Secretary-General and his Personal Representative, Mr. Diego Cordovez, on the success of their efforts. I pay tribute to the courage and perseverance of the Afghan Resistance in its struggle against the Soviet occupation forces; and to Pakistan for its steadfastness and generosity in giving shelter to much of the world's largest refugee population.

Eight years of Soviet occupation have left Afghanistan devastated. The help of the international community will be required to repair the damage and make possible the early, voluntary return of the refugees in safety and honour. We are in close touch with our European Community partners, our American and Pakistani friends, the United Nations Secretary-General, United Nations agencies and private voluntary organizations over this issue.

Since 1979 Britain has provided some £50 million to support Afghan refugees. We now pledge a further £10 million for the relief and resettlement of Afghan refugees in the current financial year (April 1988-March 1989), provided properly co-ordinated international arrangements are put in place.

I hope that Soviet withdrawal and the return of the refugees will pave the way for the Afghan people as a whole to reach a comprehensive internal political settlement; a settlement that will include the Resistance and lead to the election of a truly representative government by a genuine act of self-determination. The establishment of a transitional government, whose independence could not be contested, might be the way to achieve this.

Britain calls for all concerned to respect the non-alignment and independence of Afghanistan. I urge the Soviet Union to implement fully its decision. I hope also that in recognizing the error of their original intervention in Afghanistan, the Soviet authorities will be guided by a comparable wisdom and realism elsewhere in the world.

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