



General Assembly

Distr.
GENERAL

A/43/344
29 April 1988
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: RUSSIAN

Forty-third session
Item 30 of the preliminary list*

THE SITUATION IN AFGHANISTAN AND ITS IMPLICATIONS
FOR INTERNATIONAL PEACE AND SECURITY

Letter dated 27 April 1988 from the Permanent Representative of
the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics to the United Nations
addressed to the Secretary-General

I have the honour to transmit to you the text of a statement issued by the Soviet Government on 26 April 1988.

I should be grateful if you would have the text distributed as an official document of the General Assembly under item 30 of the preliminary list.

A. BELONOGOV

• A/43/50.

Annex

STATEMENT BY THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT

The agreements on a political settlement relating to Afghanistan signed in mid-April in Geneva continue to occupy the centre of attention among political circles and the world community. Opinion is almost unanimous that an event of extraordinary importance has occurred which is of vast international significance and creates the necessary external conditions for a settlement of the Afghan problem.

This assessment of the culmination of the Geneva process is entirely natural. An important breakthrough has been made towards resolving one of the most complex contemporary regional conflicts, the echoes of which were clearly heard far beyond the limits of the geographical region where it arose.

In terms of significance, the signing of the Geneva agreements is on a par with the Soviet-American Treaty on the Elimination of Their Intermediate-Range and Shorter-Range Missiles. In both cases, success was made possible by the readiness of the parties to take each other's interests into account. Just like the Treaty, the Geneva agreements show that the new political thinking can prevail over the psychology of confrontation and over outmoded stereotypes in international politics.

The road to the completion of the Geneva process was not an easy one. It had its ups and downs, its hopes and its disappointments, but in the final analysis realism and common sense, and the desire of all those participating in the settlement to achieve a generally acceptable agreement, won through. The decisive impulse was given by the statements of the General Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, M. S. Gorbachev, and the President of the Republic of Afghanistan, Najibullah, on 8 February 1988. At their meeting in Tashkent on 7 April 1988, Mr. Gorbachev and Najibullah had occasion to note that as a result of the constructive interaction among all participants in the settlement, the last obstacles to the signing of the agreements had been removed. The Secretary-General of the United Nations and his Personal Representative in the negotiations deserve great credit for the successful completion of the Geneva process. This confirms yet again the potential capabilities of the United Nations for unblocking crisis situations.

The Geneva agreements embody a balance of obligations and interests. The obligations include the cessation of the undeclared war against Afghanistan and the adoption of the necessary measures to do away with the sources of this war in Pakistan's territory, and the requisite international guarantees have been given in this respect. The problem of the return of the Afghan refugees to their homeland is solved. Conditions are created which will enable them to return unimpeded to their homes, to a peaceful life in their own country. The agreements specify the deadlines and phases for the return of the Soviet troops from Afghanistan, where they were sent at the request of the Afghan Government, to their homeland. Their withdrawal is to begin on 15 May 1988 and be completed not later than 15 February 1989. Our country awaits the homecoming of its sons who came to the

aid of a friendly neighbouring nation in its hour of need. The Soviet people will not forget their heroism, and will hold sacred the memory of those who gave their lives on Afghan soil.

The further fate of the political settlement of the situation relating to Afghanistan now depends on how responsibly, consistently and energetically the whole body of obligations entered into by the parties is put into effect. The Soviet Union is prepared to act in complete accordance with the Geneva agreements and to comply strictly and undeviatingly with their provisions. Let there be no doubt in this respect: the agreement on the withdrawal of Soviet troops, like the parties' other obligations, is irrevocable. The Government of Afghanistan has stated its determination to discharge its own responsibilities honourably and consistently. Under the terms of the agreement, a verification and monitoring mechanism under United Nations auspices is to be established. This increases the level of assurance that the agreements will be respected.

However, the position of certain politicians and statesmen is ominous. Before the ink on the signatures to the Geneva documents was even dry, statements began to be heard which contradicted the spirit and the letter of the Geneva agreements. In this connection the Soviet side wishes to emphasise once more that the rights and obligations of the parties to the agreements stem unequivocally from the texts themselves. Any deviation from the agreed provisions as written could harm the cause of the Afghan settlement, and tarnishes the moral authority of a State violating an obligation which it entered into in full view of the whole world.

With the signing of the Geneva agreements, the prospect of establishing peace on Afghan soil becomes completely tangible. These agreements create the conditions for settling Afghanistan's internal affairs without outside interference, and without further bloodshed. The Afghan Government's proposals for a cease-fire and national reconciliation remain firmly on the table. The vast majority of Afghans responded to the conclusion of the Geneva agreement with approval and hope. Only the "hard-line opposition", based in Peshawar, persists in its unwillingness to recognize the outcome of the Geneva process and refuses to cease military action. These people's warlike statements are nothing new, and only confirm their lack of a sense of responsibility for the fate of their homeland and their nation. But the major say must now be had by Pakistan, whose Government has put its signature to an obligation to prevent within its territory the presence, harbouring, in camps and bases or otherwise, organizing, training, financing, equipping and arming of political and other groups for the purpose of creating subversion against the Government of Afghanistan.

The entire international community is now following with even closer attention the course of events in Afghanistan itself. The national reconciliation policy pursued by the Afghan leadership headed by President Najibullah had already yielded its first results even before the signing of the Geneva agreements, and is increasingly attracting the support of the most varied sectors in Afghan society. Even many Afghans outside Afghanistan are now voicing their endorsement of it.

The leadership of the Republic of Afghanistan has proclaimed its readiness to initiate a dialogue with all opposition forces, including those who continue to

engage in armed uprising. The implementation of this policy is - and this is now generally recognized - a matter for the Afghans themselves. They alone can find ways which are acceptable to their country of agreeing among themselves on a nationwide basis. Others can facilitate this process. But what is of primary importance is not to take any action from outside which would lead to a deterioration of the situation or make the achievement of mutual understanding between the Afghans themselves more difficult. In this context, the mediatory efforts of United Nations Under-Secretary-General Mr. D. Córdovez would also be useful.

The Soviet Government considers that compliance with the Geneva agreements is the most important condition for the restoration of peace in the long-suffering land of Afghanistan and for its consolidation as an independent, non-aligned and neutral State.

The agreements signed at Geneva usher in a quantitatively new stage not only in Soviet-Afghan relations, but also in the solution of the Afghan problem as a whole. To assist the Afghan people in returning to a life of peace is the duty of all statesmen, politicians and public figures, and of all decent people.
