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Official Records

President: Mr. Kőrösi (Hungary)

The meeting was called to order at 10 a.m.

Agenda item 34

The situation in Afghanistan

Report of the Secretary-General (A/77/340)

Draft resolution (A/77/L.11)

The President: Afghanistan is in crisis — it is in many crises. It has been 15 months since the Taliban consolidated control over the country. Its economy is in ruins, the humanitarian situation is disastrous and two thirds of the population is hungry. Girls and women are banned from learning, having a job or getting proper medical care. The country is awash with heroin and opium. Organized crime and terrorist organizations are thriving once again.

Afghanistan faces complex and interlinked challenges that the Taliban have shown they cannot or will not solve. It is time to support the Afghan people with concrete solutions that place their needs front and centre. It is true that some problems will require some time to resolve, but there are actions the General Assembly can take to change the paradigm now.

I would like Member States to consider one solution through solidarity. The United Nations humanitarian appeal for Afghanistan, which requires \$4.4 billion, is only half funded. With winter weather just weeks away, I encourage Member States to provide urgent support to help reduce the \$2.3 billion shortfall. Let us remind

ourselves of the old saying from Afghanistan: “A real friend is one who takes the hand of his friend in times of distress and helplessness”.

Afghanistan has a rich history of scientific achievement. I encourage the country to re-engage with the international science community and allow the women who used to be respected members of the country’s science community to resume their research and studies. Afghanistan is now the only State in the world that would deny girls their full right to education. The prospect of girls’ education has been left to uncertainty amid seemingly random edicts from the Taliban.

This time last year, Fawzia Koofi, the first woman Deputy Speaker of the Afghan Parliament, recalled her dream of one day addressing the United Nations as the President of Afghanistan. She said: “With me, millions of girls and women in Afghanistan had this dream that now they think will never come true”. Dreams of becoming President have been replaced by the reality of child marriage and arrests if women and girls leave their home without a male chaperone. I reiterate my call for the protection of the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Afghans, especially of women and girls.

Similarly, I urge the Taliban to ensure the safety of all Afghans, regardless of their gender, ethnic background, religious belief or political affiliation; protect journalists and civil society members; allow unhindered humanitarian aid; and cooperate with

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humanitarian workers. We expect the Taliban to make good on the commitments they made to the international community — to show honesty through concrete action.

The dramatic changes of 2021 have taken a massive toll on Afghanistan's economy and profoundly widened many security risks. Narcotics now make up the country's largest economic sector. Earlier this month, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime reported that opium cultivation in 2022 increased by 32 per cent. Prices have soared. We know where those drugs are sent, and we know who profits from those drugs.

The threat of drug trafficking is linked with the threat of terrorism and regional and global insecurity. The Haqqani Network and Al-Qaida are just some of the terrorist organizations active in Afghanistan. It is crucial that Taliban leaders engage in a serious counter-terrorism dialogue to stop and reverse the flow of foreign extremists into the country and prevent their own from becoming foreign terrorist fighters in other countries. Afghanistan must never again become a breeding ground and safe haven for terrorists.

There is a moral, as well as a practical, imperative for the international community to support an inclusive and sustainable peace in Afghanistan. I call on the Taliban, other Afghans and members of the international community to cooperate with the Special Representative as she implements the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). I welcome the appointment of Ms. Roza Otunbayeva as the new Head of UNAMA. I commend dialogue and mediation initiatives such as the Tashkent format. After almost five decades of relentless conflict, we need continued and concerted efforts for the peaceful rebuilding of Afghanistan.

I now give the floor to the representative of Germany to introduce draft resolution A/77/L.11.

Ms. Leendertse (Germany): Fifteen months after the forceful takeover by the Taliban, the situation in Afghanistan remains of the utmost concern. We are witnessing a massive economic contraction and a humanitarian crisis. Half the population is subject to critical levels of food insecurity. We expect a harsh winter and levels of needs that we have not seen in the past decades, with little prospect for economic recovery or a reduction of poverty.

The widespread and systemic denial of fundamental human rights by the Taliban is the reality of Afghanistan and its people. The systematic oppression of women and

girls, who cannot enjoy their civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights, is extremely worrisome. There is an absence of any effort towards inclusive governance and a sustainable long-term political solution to govern the country. We have also not seen any effort by the Taliban towards the full enjoyment by women, girls and persons belonging to minorities of their human rights. Security remains fragile. The decrease in conflict-related security incidents contrasts with the ongoing fighting in the country and an increasing number of terrorist attacks on schools, public transport, places of worship and diplomatic premises.

The Taliban control the country, but they do not live up to their responsibility towards the Afghan people. They do not respond to the needs of the Afghan population. That makes a coherent international response all the more important. Draft resolution A/77/L.11, which is before the Assembly, and which we seek to adopt by consensus, sends a strong signal of support to the Afghan people. It is a reminder of the international community's expectations of the Taliban, which the Security Council formulated through its resolution 2593 (2021), adopted in August 2021.

The draft resolution before us is a clear call to respect, protect and fulfil human rights, develop inclusive governance and fight terrorism. It contains the clear message that there cannot be business as usual and a pathway towards recognition without such measures being taken. Engagement with the Taliban will have to remain limited in steps and scope, based on principles.

The draft resolution is testimony to our joint commitment to assisting the Afghan people, who rely on us, while being neglected by their rulers. Germany remains engaged. Since August 2021, we have provided more than €1 billion in humanitarian assistance and support for the basic needs of the Afghan people and in support of Afghanistan's neighbours.

The draft resolution is testimony to our support for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). It fully endorses the renewal of UNAMA's mandate in March of this year, and it is also testimony to our common long-term aspiration to stabilize Afghanistan.

Finally, the draft resolution expresses the concerns that we all share, together with the neighbours of Afghanistan, regarding the dangers of a spillover of instability, irregular migration flows, radicalization,

terrorism, organized crime and drug trafficking. It clearly formulates appreciation and support for the efforts of countries of the region to support Afghanistan and its people.

Germany is the traditional facilitator of the General Assembly resolution entitled “The situation in Afghanistan”. I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the sponsors of this draft resolution for their invaluable support. This year’s draft resolution is the product of a comprehensive negotiation process, taking a step back after the events of last summer and including a sizeable core group inviting neighbouring countries and those countries carrying a heavy burden over the past 15 months. It contains our collective political understanding and is recommended for adoption by consensus.

Mr. Faiq (Afghanistan): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this meeting to adopt draft resolution A/77/L.11, on the situation in Afghanistan.

Let me begin by expressing the gratitude and deep appreciation of the people of Afghanistan to the Permanent Mission of Germany as the traditional facilitator of the resolution, particularly Ambassador Antje Leendertse and Counsellor Michael Hasenau and his team for their leadership, hard work and capable facilitation of this draft resolution. Germany has been one of the great supporters of the Afghan people and a genuine partner and ally in supporting international efforts to ensure peace, security and prosperity in Afghanistan. I also wish to extend my appreciation to all the other countries that participated in the discussions, demonstrated flexibility and supported this draft resolution through their contributions and sponsorship.

Since the most recent time that such a resolution was adopted by the General Assembly, in November 2019 (see A/74/PV.36), unfortunately, Afghanistan has gone through quite dramatic and tragic social, economic and political upheavals. The forced takeover of Afghanistan by the Taliban on 15 August 2021 further exacerbated the already deteriorating socioeconomic and humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. Since then, we have witnessed an increasing social, economic and humanitarian crisis, including a total collapse and regression of two decades of hard-won gains. The Taliban’s failure to establish a legitimate, accountable and inclusive Government and its unwillingness to address those crises to put Afghanistan back on the road to recovery have deeply affected the lives of

the people of Afghanistan, particularly women and girls. That has further isolated Afghanistan from the international community.

All reports warn of growing concerns regarding the precarious situation in Afghanistan, where 24.4 million people are currently in need of humanitarian assistance. The country is also facing multiple threats, which include increasing terrorist attacks on civilian targets, including particular minority groups, such as the Shia Hazara, Hindus, Sufis and Sikhs; a 32 per cent increase in opium cultivation this year; the systematic erasure of women and girls from all areas of public life; and continued violations and abuses of human rights, including arbitrary arrests and extrajudicial killings of former security forces, journalists, human rights defenders and protesters, as well as the collective punishment and forced displacement of particular ethnic groups.

There are deep concerns about the growing security threats emanating from the presence of terrorist groups in Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan, including women, girls and minority communities, are not safe in places of education and worship. The Afghan people have been the recurring victims of terror attacks, and we lost many lives in the fight against terrorism. The threat of terrorism requires a collective effort, enabled through the genuine cooperation of all actors and conducted through a capable, legitimate and trusted Government.

The draft resolution reflects in an objective and balanced way the overall current social, economic, security and political situation in Afghanistan and its impacts on the countries in the region and beyond, including threats, challenges, problems and solutions, and calls for immediate action by all stakeholders. We appreciate that the draft resolution highlights the most pressing issues, including the humanitarian crisis, by urging the international community to provide humanitarian assistance by supporting the 2022 humanitarian response plan for Afghanistan. We are grateful to the donor and pledging countries for providing support and funding.

By the same token, we also appreciate that the draft resolution highlights the human rights situation and expresses serious concern about the situation of women, young people and minorities. The Taliban’s ongoing human rights violations and growing repression of the fundamental freedoms of all Afghans,

including women and girls, human rights activists and journalists, is factual, as reflected in the reports of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and of the Secretary-General. Depriving women and girls from their fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the right to work and education, has had a profound impact on the lives of half of Afghan society and the country's economy. The situation of women and girls in Afghanistan must not be overlooked, and their rights should not be compromised. All girls and boys should have access to equal and quality education at all levels. The draft resolution also calls for action to address the problem of the Afghan refugees, who are in desperate need of support and assistance.

We are grateful to all Member States for their constructive engagement despite their differences of views. The most important issue for the Afghan people is the implementation of the draft resolution before us, in particular the section that emphasizes the importance of the establishment by the Taliban of an inclusive and representative system that upholds human rights, including for women, girls, children and minorities, as well as the other United Nations resolutions on the situation in Afghanistan. I would like to reiterate that, without an inclusive, representative, participatory and responsive Government at the national and subnational levels, with the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, we will not be able to achieve a sustainable, lasting peace and economic and political stability in Afghanistan. The Taliban should respond to the calls by the Afghan people and international partners for them to fulfil their commitments by establishing an inclusive and accountable system, as well as upholding the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Afghans.

The people of Afghanistan have been suffering owing to protracted conflict, poverty, starvation, food insecurity, unemployment and migration. They deserve a peaceful, decent and dignified life. The people of Afghanistan desperately need the support and solidarity of all international partners, particularly the United Nations, in achieving their long-awaited aspirations for enduring peace, stability and prosperity. The draft resolution must be adopted by consensus at this crucial juncture in order to protect the needs of the Afghan people and ensure that their struggle is not forgotten. The draft resolution will create hope and optimism for the people of Afghanistan, who are faced with a dire humanitarian and economic situation. By adopting the

draft resolution today, the General Assembly and the Member States will reaffirm their commitments and continued support to the people of Afghanistan.

In conclusion, I would like to take this opportunity to thank all countries for the sustained support they have provided to date to the people of Afghanistan. Their support for today's draft resolution will send the strong message that the United Nations and its Member States will continue to support the people of Afghanistan in their quest to achieve enduring peace, stability and prosperity through their collective efforts.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of the European Union, in its capacity as observer.

Mr. Skoog (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union (EU) and its 27 member States. The candidate countries Montenegro, Serbia, Albania, Ukraine and the Republic of Moldova; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as Andorra and Monaco, align themselves with this statement.

Let me start by thanking all the delegations that participated constructively in the consultations on the text of draft resolution A/77/L.11 and, in particular, Germany and its team, for facilitating the negotiations. International unity in the approach to the challenges in Afghanistan is very important for the Afghan people, and we hope that the draft resolution will be adopted by consensus today.

The EU reiterates its support for the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and welcomes its efforts thus far. The United Nations remains an indispensable partner and a key actor on the ground. We also greatly appreciate the efforts and reports of Mr. Richard Bennett, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan.

We want to reaffirm that the EU and its member States will stand with the Afghan people, and that we remain committed to stability, prosperity and sustainable peace in Afghanistan and the broader region. That will require an inclusive political process with the full, equal and meaningful participation of all Afghans, including all ethnic groups and religious minorities, and the meaningful participation of women in decision-making positions. In that regard, the EU and its member States welcomed the adoption of Security

Council resolution 2593 (2021), which encourages such an inclusive, negotiated political settlement and sends a clear, strong and united message on the international community's expectations and demands that must be transformed into concrete actions.

We advocate for the protection and the fulfilment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, in accordance with international conventions, to which Afghanistan as a State party should adhere, while respecting international humanitarian law. The EU remains deeply alarmed by the increase in human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan. Accountability must be ensured and, in that regard, we recall that Afghanistan is a party to the Rome Statute.

As you said, Sir, and as the representative of Afghanistan just set out in detail, the human rights situation of women and girls continues to deteriorate. The EU reiterates its strong, unwavering commitment to the full, equal and meaningful participation of all women and girls in all spheres of life in Afghanistan, as well as to their protection from all forms of discrimination and violence. Nowhere else are girls banned from attending secondary education — that is unacceptable and must be revoked immediately. Moreover, persons belonging to ethnic groups and religious minorities, notably Hazaras and the Shia population, as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons, human rights defenders and journalists and other media workers, suffer physical abuse, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances, torture and even killings. That is unacceptable. The shrinking space for civil society and media and the restrictions on human rights and fundamental freedoms remain primary concerns.

Afghanistan also faces a deep humanitarian and economic crisis. The situation is expected to further deteriorate during the upcoming winter. In the absence of a legitimate and recognized Afghan government, the EU has been working tirelessly with the international community to find principled, pragmatic and creative solutions to support the Afghan people and mitigate the grave humanitarian and economic crisis. We have committed more than €300 million in humanitarian aid and mobilized €330 million to maintain basic services and sustain livelihoods through United Nations partners, local and international organizations and non-governmental organizations, to all of whom we are entirely grateful.

The EU intends to continue its support to the Afghan people in close coordination with international partners. We have established a minimal presence in Kabul to ensure the delivery of assistance, facilitate operational coordination and represent EU policies and positions. The EU prioritizes direct engagement with the Afghan people, including through the Afghan Women Leaders Forum, which aims to ensure that Afghan women have a voice in international forums.

Allowing the implementation of humanitarian operations in Afghanistan, in line with the humanitarian principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence and full respect of international humanitarian law, is key. The Taliban must respect the independence of humanitarian operations and guarantee safe and unhindered access to the entire territory for all humanitarian staff, including female staff. The safety of beneficiaries of humanitarian aid must be ensured, and all of them must have free and unhindered access to aid services. We expect that all foreign nationals and Afghans who want to leave the country are allowed a safe, secure and orderly departure, in line with Security Council resolution 2593 (2021), in full respect of the freedom of movement.

An unstable Afghanistan will continue to threaten and destabilize its neighbours, the wider region and beyond. Illicit drug trafficking and terrorism do not respect international borders. The EU underlines the importance of preventing Afghanistan from serving as a base for hosting, financing or exporting terrorism to other countries. All efforts must be pursued to ensure that the Taliban cease all direct or indirect ties with international terrorism. We are greatly concerned about the continued presence of terrorist organizations in Afghanistan, including Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan Province.

We maintain contact with the Taliban in order to allow for dialogue on the political priorities of the European Union, to ensure the EU can provide support to the Afghan people and to raise the key issues related to the five benchmarks defined by the EU's Foreign Ministers. The EU engagement with the Taliban is not an international legitimization of the Taliban's self-appointed interim Government and is carefully calibrated to the policies and actions of the Taliban.

In conclusion, we believe that the draft resolution we will adopt today is an important reflection of our collective political understanding of the present

situation; of what is required to improve the plight of the people, not least for women and girls; of our clear demands and expectations of the Taliban; and of our own commitment to and solidarity with the people of Afghanistan as their long-term partners.

Mr. Alwasil (Saudi Arabia) (*spoke in Arabic*): I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) — the United Arab Emirates, the Kingdom of Bahrain, the Sultanate of Oman, the State of Qatar, the State of Kuwait and my own country, the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia — under item 34 of the agenda of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, entitled “The situation in Afghanistan”.

We thank you, Mr. President, for convening today’s meeting to discuss the latest developments in Afghanistan. We also take this opportunity to thank all the delegations that have participated in the consultations on the draft resolution contained in document A/77/L.11. We specifically thank the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany for leading the negotiations process.

We reaffirm that we had hoped that the draft resolution would attach greater importance to supporting Afghanistan by promoting its political stability and other various security aspects besides fighting terrorism and drug trafficking. That is extremely important to achieving comprehensive development, while taking into account the specificities of the Afghan people. We had hoped that the international community will send a message of solidarity and support to the Afghan people. Accordingly, the GCC countries express their deep concern over the continuing deterioration of the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan and the fact that the Afghan economy is unable to ensure its main functions. We are also concerned about limiting the freedoms and rights of women and girls and the escalation of terrorist threats.

The GCC countries have always supported security, peace and stability at the regional and international levels and helped to achieve that end whenever needed. In that context, the GCC countries have been supporting all endeavours aimed at restoring security and stability in Afghanistan. The GCC countries reaffirm the joint religious and cultural ties between the brotherly peoples of the Gulf and Afghanistan as well as the importance of Afghanistan, its status and its prominent role in that vital region of the world.

The GCC countries stress that building a secure and stable Afghanistan is a sine qua non for the achievement of peace and stability in its region and the world. To achieve that goal and ensure that international efforts in that regard are not undermined, the GCC countries reaffirm that Afghanistan should not become a hub for terrorist operations or a safe haven for terrorists. Its territories should not be used to export drugs, as that destabilizes the region and the world.

The GCC countries strongly denounce and always reject all forms of violence aimed at destabilizing security and which run counter to all religions and humanitarian values and principles. The GCC countries reaffirm the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the importance of restoring peace and security in order to achieve the hopes and aspirations of the brotherly Afghan people and to establish regional and international peace and security. In the context of the great efforts that are being made by the GCC countries to support the Afghan people, we have backed all efforts aimed at achieving security, peace and prosperity in Afghanistan, including the tireless efforts of the sisterly State of Qatar since 2020 to support the peace process in Afghanistan with a view to finding peaceful means for achieving a comprehensive political settlement in the country.

The GCC countries are also cooperating constructively with international organizations that are dealing effectively with the Afghan issue. That cooperation has also been undertaken with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in support of the outcomes of its relevant conferences. We have also supported the humanitarian trust fund for Afghanistan in cooperation with the Islamic Development Bank. At the humanitarian level, the GCC countries have been supporting development and humanitarian programmes in Afghanistan, especially in relation to all efforts related to evacuation issues.

In conclusion, the GCC countries call upon the international community not to give up on the Afghan people and to assist them in achieving their aspirations towards establishing a free, secure and stable Afghanistan living in harmony with its neighbours. The GCC countries remain committed to supporting political, humanitarian and development efforts at the regional and international levels with a view to overcoming the current political stalemate and building a more stable and prosperous future for Afghanistan. We commend all the efforts deployed by all Member States

as well as the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan aimed at helping the country. We reiterate the importance of uniting all our efforts to tackle the challenges in Afghanistan, especially those related to stability and prosperity in the country, as they are part and parcel of the stability and prosperity of the region and the entire world.

Ms. Kalkku (Finland): I am pleased to deliver this statement on behalf of the Nordic countries — Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Finland.

At the outset, I would like to warmly thank Germany for bringing the negotiations on this key draft resolution (A/77/L.11) to a conclusion. We, the Nordic countries, have co-sponsored the draft resolution (A/77/L.11) at hand.

We remain deeply concerned by the developments in Afghanistan. It is essential that the international community continue to pay sustained attention to the situation and developments on the ground. The Nordic countries' commitment to the Afghan people remains steadfast.

The presence of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) is vital. We appreciate UNAMA's work in the new reality facing Afghanistan and want to reaffirm our unswerving support for the continuation of its mandate and work, including its strong human rights mandate, on which Norway has led negotiations in the Security Council. Let me express our appreciation for the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Roza Otunbayeva, and wish her the best with her demanding work ahead. Let me also express our gratitude and appreciation to Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett, whose work on human rights is invaluable.

The human rights situation in Afghanistan is alarming. Women's and girls' full and equal enjoyment of human rights can never be negotiable. It must be a front-and-centre political priority. We expect the Taliban to respect and ensure the fulfilment of Afghanistan's obligations under international law and to hear the demands of the Afghans and the international community. We are not witnessing isolated cases of violations and abuses of women's enjoyment of human rights, but a systematic eradication of their human rights and freedoms. Women are forced to disappear from the public space, but let me assure members, they will not disappear. We will not forget nor give up on the Afghan women.

The humanitarian, human rights, economic and political crises are all interconnected, and we must address them simultaneously. The ongoing crisis affects women and girls disproportionately. Only an inclusive political process and safe participatory dialogue to decide on the future of Afghanistan can provide a path towards sustainable peace and development. We call on the Taliban to reconsider the decisions and policies that restrict the rights of women and their participation in economic, social and political life.

Access to education for all children — girls and boys — is a human right. Shutting girls out of secondary schools will have an impact on their lives and on the Afghan society that will be hard to reverse. That will have an immense impact for generations to come. We urge the Taliban to live up to their promises and act immediately to open schools for all girls.

We strongly condemn killings, arbitrary detentions, enforced disappearances and any discrimination, abuse and reprisals against protesters, persons belonging to ethnic and religious groups, human rights defenders and media workers. Instead, the *de facto* authorities should engage with them and enable their work and participation. We welcome the general amnesty declared by the Taliban, and we urge the Taliban to fully implement and enforce that amnesty now.

The security situation remains a concern, including the terrorist threat. Continued attacks targeting civilians, school facilities and mosques are a great concern. Those are grave violations of international humanitarian law. The *de facto* authorities are now responsible for providing security to those in danger, and those responsible must be held accountable.

The humanitarian situation is bleak. Recurring droughts, the long-lasting effects of past conflicts and the exclusion of women from society, *inter alia*, continue to hamper Afghanistan's food security and the humanitarian situation as a whole. Another winter season is near.

It is of utmost importance that the flow of humanitarian aid and support for basic needs and services for the Afghan people and the livelihoods of local communities continue. We need to support civil society in their struggle to preserve social structures. The Taliban must ensure that such help can continue independently, without any interference by the *de facto* authorities. We also need to explore sustainable ways to

secure financial transactions in and out of Afghanistan to avoid an economic collapse.

The Nordic countries continue to closely follow the developments in Afghanistan. The Taliban will not be assessed by their words, but by their actions.

Mr. Bunch (United States of America): I thank you, Mr. President, for holding today's important debate.

The United States remains committed to the Afghan people, especially Afghan women, girls and at-risk ethnic and religious communities. We are meeting at a deeply challenging time for those communities.

Since taking power, the Taliban have severely restricted women's exercise of their rights in Afghanistan, turning back two decades of progress that Afghan women themselves built, with the support of the international community. As the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, has reported "in no other country have women and girls so rapidly disappeared from all spheres of public life" (A/HRC/51/6).

The Taliban have rolled back women's and girls' right to education, women's right to work and women's freedom of movement and assembly. Rates of gender-based violence are skyrocketing. Independent media, and particularly female journalists, have been censored. The Islamic State-Khorasan Province has perpetuated horrific attacks on the Hazara community, including the recent attack on an educational centre in Kabul, which killed more than 50 people, most of them girls.

Here at the United Nations, we recall that the Charter of the United Nations affirms the faith of all peoples of the United Nations "in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women". Those are universal rights to which all States Members of the United Nations are supposed to subscribe. If the Taliban hope to be seen as legitimate and for Afghanistan to resume its rightful place in the international community, they must allow women and girls to resume their rightful place in Afghan society.

The United States has provided more than \$1.1 billion in total humanitarian assistance in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover more than one year ago, in August 2021. The United States urges other members of the international community to generously support Afghanistan's humanitarian needs and maintain support for the Afghan people. For the effective delivery

of humanitarian assistance, we reiterate the importance of full, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for all humanitarian personnel, including women. We have also supported the establishment of a mechanism to enable \$3.5 billion of Afghan Central Bank assets to be used for the benefit of the people of Afghanistan, while keeping those funds out of the hands of the Taliban and other malign actors.

With the help of Swiss and Afghan partners, the Afghan Fund was incorporated as a Swiss foundation to protect, preserve and, on a targeted basis, disburse \$3.5 billion for the benefit of the Afghan people. Those disbursements are intended to help address the acute effects of Afghanistan's economic and humanitarian crises by supporting Afghanistan's macroeconomic and financial stability.

We would also like to thank Germany for its work in producing a balanced draft resolution (A/77/L.11) that covers a broad range of issues at play in Afghanistan — from human rights to counter-terrorism to humanitarian assistance and more. We encourage all States Members of the United Nations to support the draft resolution. Let me simply conclude by reaffirming the United States commitment to the future of Afghanistan and the future of its people.

Ms. Al-Thani (Qatar) (*spoke in Arabic*): I thank you, Mr. President, for convening this important meeting on the situation in Afghanistan. I also thank the Secretary-General for his report (A/77/340), and I thank the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany for having led the negotiation process on the draft resolution under consideration in the General Assembly (A/77/L.11).

My country's delegation associates itself with the statement made by the representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Cooperation Council for the Arab States of the Gulf.

Since the beginning of its constructive engagement in Afghanistan, the State of Qatar's objectives and priorities have always been clear and specific. They represent the implemented goals and terms of reference of our foreign policy based on preventive diplomacy, mediation and resolving regional and international disputes through dialogue and negotiations while helping the Afghan people to achieve freedom, peace and development, in addition to bolstering regional and international security and stability. To that end, the State of Qatar has deployed tireless diplomatic and

political efforts over many years in order to facilitate negotiations between the warring parties locally and internationally so as to put an end to the war in Afghanistan. Our efforts led to a common declaration between the United States and Taliban in February 2020 to achieve peace in Afghanistan. That was welcomed by the Security Council.

In addition, we have made continuous efforts to facilitate and promote channels of communication among international partners and the de facto Afghan Government in order to promote peace, protect civilians and deliver humanitarian and development aid while protecting and promoting the political, economic and social rights of the Afghan people, including the rights of children, women and girls.

The State of Qatar facilitated one of the largest evacuation operations in modern history by evacuating 80,000 people at high risk, including Afghans and foreigners, and provided them with support in Doha, including by providing shelters and health care. In March, the State of Qatar organized a pledging conference for humanitarian response in Afghanistan, in cooperation with the United Nations and international partners, to alleviate the suffering of Afghans. The State of Qatar pledged to provide \$25 million to the Afghan people as part of Afghanistan humanitarian response plan.

In addition to the deployed efforts to bring about peace, undertake mediation and deliver humanitarian aid, the State of Qatar made peacebuilding and development one of its priorities in Afghanistan in the post-war phase, in particular the issue of women and girls. During last two years, the Education Above all Foundation in the State of Qatar, the Institute of International Education, which is based in the United States, and the Qatar Fund for Development launched an initiative to assist 250 Afghan students, half of them women, by providing grants through the State of Qatar Grant Project for Afghan Refugees in order to enable them to continue their education.

In conclusion, the State of Qatar reiterates its firm commitment to working alongside the United Nations, in particular the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We commend UNAMA's vital role in that regard. We also commend regional and international partners in supporting Afghan brothers, regardless of their stratus and race, as part of our efforts to bring about peace, security, stability, development and the promotion of human rights, including those

of women, girls and children in Afghanistan. Our goal will always be the same, namely, a stable and prosperous Afghanistan. We call upon all actors to cooperate together, with strong and honest political determination, so that Afghanistan will not remain a deplorable example of the failure of the international community and humankind.

Mr. Ravindra (India): I would like to thank you, Mr. President, for convening this plenary meeting. I would also like to express our appreciation to Germany for its role in facilitating the draft resolution (A/77/L.11) on Afghanistan.

As a contiguous neighbour of Afghanistan, with strong historical and cultural links, our approach to Afghanistan, as always, will be guided by our historical friendship and our special relationship with the people of Afghanistan. As a neighbour and long-standing partner of Afghanistan, India has direct stakes in ensuring the return of peace and stability to the country. The elements in draft resolution A/77/L.11 set forth common concerns as well as the priorities and asks of the international community.

India's main priorities in Afghanistan include providing immediate humanitarian assistance for the Afghan people, the formation of a truly inclusive and representative Government, combating terrorism and drug trafficking and preserving the rights of women, children and minorities. Those benchmarks were also set forth by resolution 2593 (2021), which guides the international community's approach towards Afghanistan.

India is deeply concerned about the unfolding humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. In response to the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, as well as the urgent appeals made by the United Nations, India has dispatched several shipments of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan in recent months. Those include 40,000 metric tons of wheat and about 50 tons of medical aid, consisting of essential life-saving medicines, anti-tuberculosis medications, 500,000 doses of coronavirus disease vaccine, medical/surgical items and 28 tons of disaster-relief aid.

Those aid consignments were delivered to the Indira Gandhi Children's Hospital in Kabul, the Afghan Red Crescent Society and United Nations specialized agencies, including the World Food Programme and the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. In order to closely monitor and coordinate the efforts

of various stakeholders for the effective delivery of humanitarian assistance, and in continuation of our engagement with the Afghan people, an Indian technical team has also been deployed to our Embassy in Kabul.

India is closely monitoring the security situation in Afghanistan and is actively engaged with the international community on issues related to Afghanistan. In the recent past, terrorist attacks have targeted public spaces, such as places of worship and educational institutes, and especially of minorities. That is a concerning trend, and India strongly condemns the targeting of innocent civilians. The attack at the diplomatic premises of the Russian Federation is highly condemnable.

The collective approach of the international community is articulated in resolution 2593 (2021), which unequivocally demands that the territory of Afghanistan not be used for sheltering, training, planning or financing terrorist acts, especially terrorist individuals and entities proscribed by the Security Council, including Lashkar-e-Tayyiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed. India notes the useful role played by the Security Council Monitoring Team and it expects them to continue to monitor and report on all terrorist groups that might use Afghanistan as a base to target other countries.

Linked to the issue of terrorism is the menace of drug trafficking. We recently seized big shipments of drugs at our ports and in the high seas off our coasts. It is important to strengthen international cooperation in order to disrupt and dismantle those trafficking networks.

On the political front, India continues to call for an inclusive dispensation in Afghanistan that represents all segments of Afghan society. A broad-based, inclusive and representative formation is necessary for long-term peace and stability in the country.

Peace and security in Afghanistan are critical imperatives that all of us need to collectively strive for. India will continue to play its role in pursuit of that objective. The interests of the Afghan people will continue to be at the heart of our efforts in Afghanistan.

Mr. Ibragimov (Uzbekistan): Since the change of power in Afghanistan last year and the formation of the interim Taliban Government, the country has been experiencing the deepest socioeconomic and humanitarian crisis in its recent history. Unfortunately,

against the backdrop of other current international challenges, efforts to resolve the Afghan issue have begun to fade into the background. But we must not allow the mistakes of the past to be repeated by abandoning Afghanistan to its own problems. Today the Afghan people need the help of the international community more than ever. Any further isolation of the de facto Afghan authorities will inevitably lead to increased radicalization in the country and its transformation into a platform or safe haven for international terrorist organizations.

However, we do have to admit that the new Government of Afghanistan is not fully meeting the demands of the international community with regard to forming an inclusive Government, ensuring fundamental human rights, including those of women and national minorities, and cutting ties with various terrorist groups. At the same time, we have also seen the Taliban take some encouraging steps, including in fighting drug trafficking and drug addiction, allowing girls in northern provinces to attend school and receive an education, restoring women to jobs in State institutions and resuming paying the salaries of civil servants. Against that backdrop, we believe that the new authorities in Afghanistan need some time to fulfil their international obligations. Efforts to exert pressure and make threats should be things of the past. Only then will we be able to achieve real headway in Afghanistan.

In the past year, Uzbekistan has been taking coherent steps to ensure that the Afghan issue remains one of the international community's top priorities. At the recent Astana summit of the Conference on Interaction and Confidence-building Measures in Asia, Uzbekistan's President Shavkat Mirziyoyev put forward an important initiative to form a high-level international negotiating group to prepare and agree on with the Afghan authorities an algorithm for the phased fulfilment of the parties' obligations. That initiative would not only help to bring the positions of various countries closer to that of the new Afghan authorities but would be conducive to addressing the current dire socioeconomic situation in the country.

The group could also conduct ongoing direct negotiations with the Taliban movement to develop a detailed road map on the interim Government of Afghanistan's fulfilment of the major international demands and obligations — first, forming an inclusive Government with the participation of all ethnic groups and religious confessions of Afghanistan; secondly,

ensuring fundamental human rights, especially those of women and national minorities, and providing all Afghan girls with access to a full school education; thirdly, preventing Afghan territory from once again being transformed into a springboard for international terrorists; and fourthly, cutting all ties with the various terrorist groups in the country's territory, first and foremost Al-Qaida and the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant.

Mr. Mohamedou (Mauritania), Vice-President, took the Chair.

We believe that those concrete steps by the Taliban would not only improve the international community's attitude to the de facto Government but would also be conducive to the unfreezing of the country's foreign assets, the gradual removal of the Taliban movement's leadership from the Security Council's sanctions list, a resumption of financial assistance from donor countries and increased international efforts to provide humanitarian and other aid to the Afghan people under the auspices of the United Nations.

Maintaining active discussions with the current authorities in Kabul on issues pertaining to the implementation in Afghanistan of various infrastructure projects — first and foremost in the areas of transport, logistics and energy — should be among the key goals of the proposed group. Special attention should also be given to increasing Afghanistan's active involvement in regional integration processes of an economic nature. Through the negotiating group's activities we could achieve the practical implementation of regional connectivity in which Afghanistan would be an important bridge connecting Central and South Asia. The proposed group could include United Nations Member States, as well as international organizations that are not indifferent to the fate of the long-suffering Afghan people.

In conclusion, I would like to emphasize that Uzbekistan supports today's draft resolution on Afghanistan (A/77/L.11) because we believe that the international community should continue its support for the Afghan people to build a stable, resilient, prosperous and secure State.

Mr. Nebenzia (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): The Russian Federation attaches great importance to the General Assembly's consideration of the situation in Afghanistan. We have consistently advocated for the Assembly's adoption of a genuinely

consensus resolution, whose text would reflect both the current realities and a consolidated approach on the part of the international community to the quest for an effective long-term settlement of the Afghan question. Unfortunately the working process on the document has been demonstrably the complete opposite of that for years now.

We see our Western colleagues making persistent efforts to impose their own interpretation of what is happening in the country on the entire international community in order to carefully gloss over the consequences of their 20-year war and the irresponsible flight of foreign troops at the end of August 2021. The hypocrisy in their shifting of all the blame for the failure of their military campaign and for the continuing deteriorating situation onto the new authorities is blatant. Against that backdrop, Afghanistan's ongoing socioeconomic and humanitarian problems, as well as the concerns of the States in the region, have simply been ignored.

We have repeatedly emphasized that the members of the General Assembly would be quite capable of achieving consensus on a resolution on Afghanistan. For that to happen, the process itself has to be objective and take into account a wide range of positions. However, in practice our Western colleagues have continued to show no interest in doing honest work, preferring to indulge in games and manipulation behind the scenes. This time, for instance, they outright demanded, including by putting pressure on the informal penholders, that anything interfering with what they consider to be the correct perception of the current situation in the country and its causes be removed from the text. It is therefore no surprise that any references to investigations of the Western coalition's war crimes in Afghanistan — which the International Criminal Court was hastily forced to deprioritize following threats by the United States — were subsequently removed from the final document.

The West would like everyone to forget the irresponsible actions of the United States and NATO military forces, which regularly carried out random air strikes on ordinary Afghans, not to mention night raids and extrajudicial killings of civilians, including women and children. Incidentally, the British Broadcasting Corporation did yet another report on that just the other day. Unfortunately, despite the reports that various independent non-governmental organizations have issued about horrific war crimes, with a view to seeing

justice done and holding the perpetrators to account, no investigations have been done, owing to crude blackmail on the part of Washington. However, such cynicism is nothing new. It is typical of the attitude of the United States and its allies to the war crimes they have committed in other crisis areas, including Iraq, Syria and Libya. Against that backdrop, it seems hypocritical of our Western colleagues to limit the discussion of human rights violations to those of the de facto authorities in Afghanistan. Our Western colleagues also found unacceptable those passages pertaining to weapons abandoned by the United States and NATO in Afghanistan following the hasty withdrawal of their troops. And yet those delegations did not even try to give a reasonable explanation of their position on the points they considered problematic.

Amid the deteriorating humanitarian and economic situation in Afghanistan, the quest for a speedy solution to the protracted issue of the frozen Afghan assets that the country needs for its economic recovery and further development has been pretty much ignored. We have noted the lack of willingness among Western donors to seriously discuss the matter without trying to use this financial issue as leverage for putting pressure on the de facto authorities. At the same time, it is obvious that the fate of ordinary Afghans, who are without the most basic means of subsistence, is bottom of the list of those countries' concerns. We are disappointed by the obvious unwillingness of our Western colleagues even to mention the role of regional organizations such as the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation or to consider the proposals of States of the region for assisting Afghanistan with its socioeconomic recovery and further development.

It is deeply regrettable that thanks to a preconceived position benefiting a particular group of countries and a clear disregard for proposals supported by the States of the region, the document was ultimately an unbalanced one. In the circumstances we feel compelled to call for putting draft resolution A/77/L.11 to a vote.

In conclusion, we would like to emphasize that despite the situation regarding the draft resolution, we continue to support Afghanistan and its people in this important period for them, and our vote should be interpreted only as disapproval of the actions and working methods of the informal penholders on the file.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): Pakistan and Afghanistan are inextricably bound together by bonds of culture, faith, ethnicity and common geography. For the past 40 years, the people of Afghanistan have endured prolonged suffering from foreign interventions, civil war and terrorism. As Afghanistan's immediate neighbour, Pakistan has a vital stake in peace and stability there — in an Afghanistan that is at peace with itself, its neighbours and the wider international community; an Afghanistan that respects and nurtures all its citizens, irrespective of gender, ethnicity or religion; an Afghanistan that is free of terrorism; and a prosperous Afghanistan that is well integrated into the international community.

One year after the withdrawal of foreign troops and the assumption of power by the Taliban Government, the first priority remains the prevention of a humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan. Ninety-five per cent of Afghanistan's people live in extreme poverty, and another winter is coming. To prevent another humanitarian crisis, the international community must respond positively to the Secretary-General's call for \$4.2 billion in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan. Despite our own calamity from an epic flood disaster, this year Pakistan has kept open the land, air and sea corridors to and from Afghanistan to provide such support as we can to our Afghan brothers and sisters. Even 40 years on, Pakistan continues to host and support more than 3 million Afghan refugees.

Secondly, it is essential to revive the Afghan economy, especially the banking system, without which commerce and investment have been frozen. The urgent issue of releasing Afghanistan's national reserves held abroad is crucial to the revival of the banking system and the promotion of normal business activity. A rapid resumption of reconstruction in Afghanistan and the implementation of shovel-ready regional connectivity and infrastructure projects with Central Asia, as well as the extension of the China-Pakistan economic corridor to Afghanistan, would contribute immensely to development and peace in Afghanistan and the adjacent regions.

Thirdly, it will be critical to avoid actions that could ignite another internal conflict within Afghanistan. Regardless of ideological considerations, the world must welcome the fact that after 40 years, a single authority controls the entire territory of Afghanistan and there is no credible challenge to that authority. It is essential to ensure that no spoilers, within or

outside Afghanistan, are able to foment instability, insurgency or terrorism in Afghanistan. We must check the role of spoilers, especially the one from our region that wants to aid and abet terrorism against Pakistan from Afghan soil, and the terrorist network it has established must be dismantled in Afghanistan and the region. It is in the vital interests of the entire international community to effectively end the threat of terrorism — within Afghanistan or emanating from it — posed by the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan or Da'esh, the Tehrik-i-Taliban, the Eastern Turkistan Islamic Movement, the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and other terrorist groups. We must develop a comprehensive counter-terrorism strategy. And to do that, engagement with the de facto Government is essential.

Pakistan will support counter-terrorism efforts while respecting Afghanistan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Pakistan fully shares the international community's desire to ensure the full protection of human rights, especially women's rights, and greater political, social and gender inclusion. Those objectives are more likely to be achieved through greater and more sustained engagement with Afghanistan and its de facto Government. It is worth repeating that what could not be realized through force cannot be achieved through isolation, sanctions or financial coercion. A coercive approach could lead to renewed violence and conflict, strengthen terrorist groups and generate a new flow of Afghan refugees that none of Afghanistan's neighbours are in a position to accommodate.

With regard to human rights and girls' education, Pakistan, along with other Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) countries, remains engaged, through conversations between the Taliban and the delegations of Islamic scholars and ulemas, in addressing questions of sharia and its interpretation, particularly with a view to facilitating education prospects for Afghan women and girls. It is important that we continue to build on those initiatives with patience and perseverance. As regards political inclusion, the efforts by the de facto Afghan Government to encourage the return of former Afghan officials and the announcement of a general amnesty must be welcomed and built on to promote greater inclusivity in the governance of Afghanistan. We should also welcome the announcement by the de facto Government of a ban on poppy cultivation. If the ban is to be successful, the international community

should support efforts to promote alternative crops that can support the livelihoods of Afghan farmers.

We trust that the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) will maintain its close engagement and build a relationship of mutual trust with the de facto Government of Afghanistan. We welcome the appointment of the new Special Representative of the Secretary-General, Ms. Roza Otunbayeva. We hope that UNAMA's composition will become aligned with the new realities in Afghanistan.

Finally, the international community must build a realistic and pragmatic path towards normalization in Afghanistan, one that addresses the concerns of the world community — human rights, inclusion and terrorism — while also accommodating the legitimate expectations of the de facto Afghan Government. Pakistan will continue its endeavour to that end within the format of Afghanistan's six immediate neighbours plus Russia within the OIC and with other friendly countries.

Mr. Razali (Malaysia): The situation in Afghanistan is of grave concern to Malaysia. The precarious security environment, the curtailing of civil liberties and the dire humanitarian scenario are intensifying the hardships faced by the Afghan people. The food insecurity and malnutrition crisis and the combination of severe drought and natural disasters are further exacerbating their plight.

In his report (A/77/340), the Secretary-General highlights that approximately 24.4 million people, or 59 per cent of the estimated population of Afghanistan, are in need of humanitarian assistance this year, up from 18.4 million people at the beginning of 2021. The international community must work hand in hand to alleviate the suffering of the people of Afghanistan, especially those impacted by disaster and food insecurity. In response to the earthquake and floods that struck Afghanistan earlier this year, the Government of Malaysia recently made a contribution of \$200,000 through the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs. That contribution is in addition to the one made during the virtual high-level ministerial meeting on the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan held on 13 September 2021, as well as through the Organization of Islamic Cooperation humanitarian trust fund for Afghanistan, established in December 2021.

In addition, a number of Malaysian non-governmental organizations continue to engage with relevant parties and actively extended humanitarian assistance to the

Afghan people, including through humanitarian relief missions and the operation of health and preschool facilities. Malaysia expresses its appreciation to the leadership and staff members of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) for their unstinting assistance to the Government and the people of Afghanistan, and we echo the Secretary-General's appeal for funding support to the humanitarian response plan to meet the \$2.59 billion shortfall in order to enable the provision of a life-saving response to Afghans in need.

Malaysia remains committed to an Afghan-led, Afghan-owned and Afghan-controlled peace and national reconciliation process. That process must be inclusive and uphold human rights and fundamental freedoms, which include the full and meaningful participation of women, young people and persons belonging to ethnic, religious and other minority groups. In that regard, Malaysia is concerned about the infringement of the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan, particularly the continued deprivation of secondary and tertiary education for girls. All impediments to the full enjoyment of that fundamental right must be promptly removed.

Malaysia is also deeply concerned about the persistent attacks against ethnic, religious and other minority groups in Afghanistan, in particular by terrorist groups. We condemn in the strongest terms terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and we deplore the spate of attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including educational facilities and religious sites, as well as diplomatic premises and personnel. The perpetrators of such heinous acts must be held accountable.

Malaysia notes with appreciation the recommendations contained in the most recent report by UNAMA on human rights in Afghanistan, published in June, and calls for their careful consideration and prompt implementation, including by the international community.

Decades of conflict on Afghan soil have resulted in contamination by remnants of war, in particular explosive ordnance. Those, coupled with the significant threat from improvised explosive devices (IEDs), continue to pose serious harm to civilians and humanitarian personnel, with disproportionate impacts on children. Every now and then, civilians are either killed or maimed due to the detonation of

unexploded ordnance or IEDs. Malaysia commends the work of the United Nations Mine Action Service in clearing contaminated land in Afghanistan in the face of challenging circumstances, and we call for support in eradicating the harm posed by remnants of war and IEDs.

There is also a need to undertake concrete measures to address the narcotics problem in Afghanistan given the strong linkages to criminal activities and terrorism. We note the ban on the cultivation of opium poppies and all narcotics, decreed by the Taliban Government in April, as well as the engagement with the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on alternative livelihood programmes for farmers.

While the peace and national reconciliation process must emanate from within Afghanistan, the support of the international community is a requisite towards creating favourable conditions in that regard. Regional cooperation plays an important role in the creation of such conditions in Afghanistan, and it should be recognized. Malaysia wishes to acknowledge the efforts and contribution of the various regional organizations and arrangements vis-à-vis Afghanistan.

With regard to draft resolution A/77/L.11, which is before us this morning, Malaysia takes this opportunity to thank the Permanent Mission of Germany for facilitating the negotiations of the draft text. We understand that the draft resolution that has been introduced represents a delicate balance of the different views of delegations. While there is a desire for more ambitious language on humanitarian assistance, socioeconomic development and regional cooperation, we understand that not all delegations shared that view during the negotiations. Nevertheless, Malaysia will support the draft resolution.

Malaysia reaffirms its readiness to collaborate with third countries to provide humanitarian assistance, human capital development and financial assistance to the people of Afghanistan, including through various non-governmental organizations.

Mr. Gómez Robledo Verduzco (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): The issue of Afghanistan represents one of the most serious challenges for the international community. It is a country ravaged by a humanitarian situation, a collapsed economy, frequent terrorist incidents and a severe human rights crisis.

The Secretary-General's reports leave no doubt about the decline in women's and girls' rights in Afghanistan, as well as the exclusion of minorities and other ethnic groups from key Government positions, which is regrettable for a people as diverse as the Afghan people. The fundamental right to education, as well as the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, must be fully implemented as a necessary element in securing Afghanistan's future.

Mexico firmly believes in dialogue as the only way to support the Afghan people. However, it is frustrating to reiterate calls for the honouring and fulfilment of promises without concrete results. We reiterate that there should be a substantial shift towards a system of participation and inclusive governance, as well as a legal framework that ensures access to justice and complies with Afghanistan's international obligations.

Faced with the increasing levels of food insecurity, unrestricted humanitarian access without discrimination is needed. Economic recovery is fundamental to a stable Afghanistan, and, given the current crisis, there is an urgent need to create jobs, with half of the Afghan labour force unable to work.

The exclusion of women means that, regardless of the support that the international community can provide, the institutional barrier is so great that lasting results cannot be achieved. Given the severe humanitarian needs, Afghanistan cannot do without the contribution of women. Sustainable peace requires the full, equal and meaningful participation of Afghan women in the peacemaking and reconstruction processes of the country. In that regard, Mexico also condemns acts of abuse and reprisals against women human rights defenders, civil society activists, health workers and humanitarian personnel.

The fight against the scourge of terrorism in Afghanistan must remain a priority. The attacks that have taken place over the past year have killed and injured unacceptably large numbers of people, and several of them targeted minorities. We reiterate that Afghan territory must never again be used as a headquarters for terrorist activities.

Mexico recognizes the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the agencies, funds and programmes on the ground. In that regard, we would like to highlight the Mission's important work in combating the traffic in small arms and light weapons in accordance with its mandate. We therefore welcome

the fact that the draft resolution before the General Assembly (A/77/L.11) incorporates the issue of arms trafficking, and we hope that the regional dimension of arms trafficking will be considered as well. We also recognize the work that is being done by Afghanistan's neighbours and urge them to continue working together with a view to stabilizing the country.

Ms. Dhanutirto (Indonesia): At the outset, I would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Germany for introducing draft resolution A/77/L.11, on the situation in Afghanistan. Indonesia believes that at this pivotal juncture it is important to value accommodation over confrontation, move the process forward and overcome stagnation. My delegation therefore affirms Indonesia's long-standing commitment to supporting Afghanistan in restoring peace and paving the way for well-being and prosperity. We are convinced that only an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process can resolve the decades of conflict. The process should lead to a comprehensive agreement that focuses on the interests of the Afghan people, including its women and girls, in order to overcome the crisis and guarantee long-lasting peace, development and stability in Afghanistan. Against that backdrop, Indonesia would like to emphasize the following points.

First, the full, equal, effective and meaningful participation of Afghan women in all walks of life is crucial to overcoming the crisis and building a peaceful, stable and prosperous Afghanistan. In March 2022, Indonesia signed a letter of intent with Qatar on the delivery of humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan, with special attention to access to education for all, including women and girls. Through that partnership, we aim to provide more scholarships and capacity-building programmes at a grass-roots level to ensure the protection and promotion of human rights, especially the right to education and freedom of movement. Prior to that initiative, in 2020 we also fostered women's empowerment by establishing the Afghanistan-Indonesia Women's Solidarity Network, which serves as a platform for Afghan women to increase their capacity for involvement and participation in the peace process.

Secondly, acknowledging and understanding the dynamics and interplay between religion and the multifaceted conflicts in the country will contribute to a more sustainable future engagement and peacebuilding process. As the world's largest Muslim-populated country, with a diverse cultural background, Indonesia believes in the implementation

of *Islam ramadan mil al-amin*, which means “blessing of the universe”. In that regard, we continue to foster dialogue between ulemas in Indonesia and Afghanistan through conferences and meetings so as to further facilitate exchanges of views on practicing Islam in order to bring about a better understanding of the teachings of moderation, tolerance and mutual respect. Together with Qatar, Indonesia recently conducted a meeting between ulemas from Indonesia, Qatar and Afghanistan in Doha and also participated in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation’s ulema visit to Kabul. During both meetings, in which an Indonesian woman ulema also participated, we emphasized how access to education for women and girls, in harmony with Islamic values, contributes to nurturing peace.

Lastly, Indonesia continues to call on the de facto authorities to fulfil their promises and commitments. Despite the ongoing efforts, we have yet to see significant developments in Afghanistan. We remain concerned about the increasing security challenges with regard to the full withdrawal of foreign troops and the significant increase in terrorist attacks aimed at the civilian population. In addition, the deteriorating situation in the country calls for immediate humanitarian mitigation. A road map with action plans to realize those commitments is essential to measuring progress and follow-ups, and the de facto authorities should showcase it. That is imperative for ensuring safety in Afghanistan and stability in the region.

In conclusion, the united support of the international community remains vital to safeguarding the peace process, ensuring the unhindered delivery of humanitarian assistance and delivering genuine relief to the Afghan people. The draft resolution reflects our continued collective support for an inclusive Afghan-owned and Afghan-led peace process with a view to building a more stable, prosperous and democratic country.

Mr. Jalil Irvani (Islamic Republic of Iran): Over the past four decades, the General Assembly has addressed the situation in Afghanistan with a focus on peace, stability, good governance, human rights and development. This year, the Assembly will consider its first draft resolution on the situation in Afghanistan (A/77/L.11) since the foreign forces’ irresponsible withdrawal and the takeover by the Taliban. Today’s debate comes at a critical time in the ongoing situation in Afghanistan, which is dealing with a number of interconnected and overlapping crises. The

humanitarian situation is particularly dire. Millions of people are living in poverty. Food insecurity is growing worse, and we are seeing continuing violations of human rights, particularly of women and girls, who are still denied access to education. Meanwhile, the de facto authorities have yet to fulfil their international obligations.

The current situation in Afghanistan serves as a reminder that intervening militarily in other countries on a pretext of combating terrorism while claiming to bring democracy, peace and prosperity not only degrades those shared values but also harms those States and their peoples. This catastrophic situation demands the recognition of their responsibility and obligations by the foreign forces that illegally invaded and occupied Afghanistan under the guise of fighting terrorism and left nothing but devastation in their wake. Today my delegation will vote in favour of the draft resolution in order to send a strong message that all members will stand firmly in unity with the people of Afghanistan in their efforts to build a peaceful, prosperous and self-resilient country.

The future of Afghanistan is principally contingent on restoration of the country’s Constitution and a strong commitment to it. An inclusive Government based on an established Constitution is the only way to ensure and protect the rights of all Afghan people, including women and girls, as well as linguistic, racial, and religious minorities. In a multi-ethnic and diverse society such as that of Afghanistan, no single group, party or faction can claim to hold power by itself alone. The Taliban must be mindful of the international community’s repeated calls for the formation of a Government that accurately reflects Afghanistan’s multi-ethnic society. The formation of an inclusive Government based on an established Constitution is a critical component for international recognition.

The international community must uphold its support for Afghanistan, particularly in terms of providing the humanitarian and development assistance that has been critical to the response to the immediate needs of the Afghan people, and of maintaining basic services and reviving the economy. In this regard, restoring the banking and financial systems and enabling access to frozen assets belonging to the Afghans and the Afghan Central Bank for the benefit of the Afghan people are crucial and represent a sustained and long-term solution to addressing the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. We emphasize that those assets must enjoy immunity and be safeguarded from domestic judicial processes and the exercise of extraterritorial jurisdiction.

It is also regrettable that — again due to the objection of some Western countries — the draft resolution fails to refer to the role of foreign military intervention and the irresponsible withdrawal of foreign forces from Afghanistan in creating such a dire situation in Afghanistan. Moreover, we strongly emphasize the necessity of investigating allegations of war crimes committed by foreign forces, and completing investigations previously undertaken and now deprioritized owing to bias and political pressure.

Afghanistan's security situation remains a source of concern, since attacks against civilians and civilian infrastructure, including educational centres and diplomatic premises, are on the rise. We strongly condemn all such attacks, most of which are perpetrated by terrorist groups, particularly Da'esh, elements of which are still coming from Syria and Iraq to Afghanistan. Terrorism has had a devastating impact on Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries. We share the strong determination of the international community not to allow Afghanistan's territory to be a safe haven for Al-Qaida, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant or other international terrorist groups and their affiliates, or that it be used by them to threaten or attack any country. We highlight the international community's ongoing demand that the Taliban commit to fighting terrorism.

Equally critical, addressing the serious threat caused by illicit opium cultivation and drug production and trafficking must be a priority. Iran is directly affected by this menace and pays a high price for it. Over the past 40 years, Iran has played an active role in combating drug trafficking in the region, in which, nearly 4,000 members of Iran's law-enforcement forces have been martyred and over 12,000 others have been injured. We stress the importance of the narcotics ban on the cultivation, production, trafficking and consumption of illicit drugs and express our concern with regard to the fact that the amount of illicit opium cultivation, as well as drug production, has been rising at an alarming rate since the Taliban took over of the country. Iran also highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach in addressing the drug problem in Afghanistan, which includes agricultural and rural-development programmes for the creation of improved alternative licit livelihoods for farmers.

We believe that this important annual resolution could also benefit from highlighting the vital role of regional organizations in promoting the long-term

stability of Afghanistan. We would like to highlight the Foreign Ministers' Meeting among the Neighbouring Countries of Afghanistan, which has developed a great deal of expertise and proved its great value on critical issues for Afghanistan. Regional cooperation and regional connectedness are key and effective means of improving the situation in Afghanistan and bringing about peace, security, stability and economic development in the country and the region.

In close coordination with Afghanistan's neighbours and other relevant parties, and while fully respecting Afghanistan's territorial integrity, unity and political independence, the Islamic Republic of Iran will continue its endeavours to assist the people of Afghanistan in restoring peace and stability and in paving the way towards well-being and prosperity for all Afghans,

Mr. Fifield (Australia): First of all, Australia thanks the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan (A/77/340), but I am compelled to say that Australia is extremely concerned by the report's findings of escalating abuses of women's and girls' human rights. The growing humanitarian demands and ongoing problems with security also highlight the significant challenges facing the people of Afghanistan.

We are particularly concerned by the disproportionate and methodical targeting of the Hazara community. The senseless attacks on places of worship, schools and public spaces are abhorrent, and we call for those responsible to be held accountable and for those responsible to be brought to justice.

We renew our call on the Taliban to respect the rights of all Afghans and ensure the protection of ethnic and religious minorities. The Taliban have spurned the opportunity for reform and instead have chosen to systematically roll back hard-won gains in human rights, including by taking away the rights of women and girls. They have doubled down on repression and non-inclusion and have been negligent in providing the most basic services to the people of Afghanistan.

The gravity of the situation cannot be overstated. Effective humanitarian support is contingent upon unimpeded access to affected populations. Ensuring the safety and freedom of movement of all humanitarian staff, especially women, is essential.

On security, the international community has been clear in its expectation that the Taliban not support the presence of any terrorist group in Afghanistan nor that

it allow Afghan territory to be used to threaten or attack any country. Afghanistan continues to remain the only country in the world to deny girls their full right to education. This is unacceptable. Once again, we urge the Taliban to stand by its commitments to the Afghan people and immediately end the exclusion of girls from secondary education and set a firm date for the opening of secondary schools to all children. We call on the Taliban to respect the rights of Afghan women and girls by removing restrictions on their movement and right to access employment.

Australia strongly supports the draft resolution on the situation in Afghanistan (A/77/L.11), and we join with the international community in reiterating our commitment to the people of Afghanistan. Australia is staying the path, no matter how long the journey. We are steadfast in our determination to support and speak up for the people of Afghanistan.

Mr. Rae (Canada) (*spoke in French*): I would like to start by congratulating the Government of Germany on the remarkable job it has done in giving us a text that reflects, I think, the opinion and feelings of the entire General Assembly. I also think it is important that we make a great effort to support the draft resolution before us today (A/77/L.11).

We are meeting here today as representatives of the States Members of the United Nations to discuss the truly tragic situation in Afghanistan. Fifteen months have passed since the fall of Kabul, which completed the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan. For many of us, regrettably, I must say that our worst fears have been realized. Millions of Afghans are facing acute hunger. In much of the country, girls are not allowed to go to school. Some women are not allowed to work and are forced to stay at home. Women are not allowed to participate in the country's once vibrant economic and social life. Terrorist groups have proliferated throughout the country, while journalists, human rights defenders, minority groups, women, former Government officials and members of the defence and security forces and many others live in fear of violence, arbitrary detention or worse. Several of my colleagues have spoken about the plight of the Hazara community, and we are seeing the extent to which the lives of several groups have become almost impossible due to the attitude of the Taliban Government.

In those incredibly difficult circumstances, the United Nations and its agencies have been the main point of contact between the Afghan people and the

international community. The brave men and women serving in Afghanistan under the United Nations have provided unprecedented levels of humanitarian assistance, including more than \$2 billion through the United Nations Humanitarian Response Plan, which has helped to sustain Afghan citizens facing food insecurity during the winter months and beyond. They are now preparing for the upcoming winter. In 2022, Canada contributed to those efforts by allocating more than \$140 million in humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and its neighbouring countries.

(*spoke in English*)

Yet here we are again. Winter is approaching and the Taliban is not meeting the needs of the Afghan people. While all of us can and must do more to support the Afghan people — and Canada will continue its humanitarian support to them — it must be said that our ability to do so is restricted by the policies of the Taliban. How can an economy grow to its potential when half of its population faces restrictions in the workforce? How can the health and education needs of a society be met if girls are not allowed to go to school? How can sustainable peace be achieved without inclusive and representative governance and media freedom? I note the comments of the Ambassador of Iran on that very subject. How can we trust the Taliban as they continue to ignore their commitments by engaging with terrorist groups that we know are now active in Afghanistan and beyond, as well as by terrorizing their own people?

We have responded. The Security Council provided a clear and united message on the demands of the Taliban. We responded through the continued engagement of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), led at the time by a Canadian, Deborah Lyons. It is now led by Roza Otunbayeva of Kyrgyzstan, with whom I have had the opportunity to discuss those issues. We also have the advantage of the appointment of a Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, who reported to the General Assembly last month on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan. I commend that document (A/HRC/51/6) to the Assembly for reading. It is a very compelling and accurate report about what is happening in the country. Mr. Bennett shared the serious concerns he has found with respect to girls' education; child, early and forced marriage; violence against women and children; the right to work; reprisal killings; arbitrary detentions and the persecution of ethnic and religious minorities. It is all there in Mr. Bennett's report. He had

the opportunity not only to interview the Government but to travel all over the country and see for himself exactly what was going on.

Not surprisingly, the desire to leave Afghanistan has never been greater, and with the cooperation of close partners, including Qatar, the United Arab Emirates, Türkiye and Pakistan, Canada has been able to fulfil its commitment to resettling 40,000 Afghan refugees, with nearly 23,000 Afghans welcomed so far. We are grateful for that support. At the same time, in my role as Chair of the Group of Friends of Afghanistan here in New York, we have been meeting both with the leadership of UNAMA on a regular basis and with the voices of Afghan civil society, who convey very clearly the difficulties of life under the Taliban, particularly for women and girls. In recent weeks we have heard calls to action from those brave leaders, talking to us directly about recognizing the continued discrimination against women by the Taliban as what they call “gender apartheid” or “gender persecution”. Canada is committed to fighting that systematic discrimination against women and continuing to work for change.

It is essential that the Assembly deliver a united message. It is essential that the people of Afghanistan know that they have not been abandoned; that our commitment to defending fundamental human rights and freedoms, as enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations, remains strong; and that the suffering of Afghan women, children and minority groups is simply not acceptable to any of us, as States Members of the United Nations united under the Charter. They must know that even as the Taliban seek to limit media freedoms, the international community is well aware of the violations being committed. There is no place to hide. There is no place to pretend that this is not happening. There is no way that in the societies in which we live we can pretend we do not know what is going on. We must seek to hold the perpetrators accountable. In that respect, I want to be clear that Canada, in congratulating Germany on an outstanding job at a difficult time, will certainly support draft resolution A/77/L.11. I call on all Member States here today to do so as well and not to use the suffering of the Afghan people to advance their own political agendas.

Sometimes when we spend the morning listening to a debate, we get a chance to hear what people have to say. Like many members, I had the opportunity to listen to the comments of my colleague the Ambassador of the Russian Federation. He indicated that Russia will

not support the draft resolution because there were elements that were absent from the document, and he did not feel that it perfectly reflected the views of his Government with respect to what should be in such a draft resolution.

Well, sometimes it helps to have a draft resolution in front of us so we can actually read it. When the representative of Russia said, for example, that there was no reference in the document to regional cooperation, that is not true. It is in the document. When he said that there was no reference to the fact that Afghanistan has been the subject of intervention by both the Russian Federation — he did not mention that intervention, but I am mentioning it now — and by Western countries after the attack on the twin towers in New York City, he said that there was no mention of accountability, but in fact there is a very clear indication of the need for investigation and for looking not only at current human rights abuses but past abuses as well.

He then complained that the International Criminal Court (ICC) had dropped the investigation into the behaviour of American and other troops in Afghanistan. Well, Russia declined to sign the Rome Statute. Russia is not a party to the Rome Treaty. If Russia were really worried about crimes against humanity and about the investigatory capacity of the ICC, then presumably it is now going to sign it. He said there was no mention in the report of the ICC dropping its investigation. I can therefore only assume that the Russian Federation is going to join the Rome Treaty, which I welcome. As Chair of the New York Working Group and Vice-President of the Assembly of States Parties, we would welcome Russia’s participation, as we would the participation of the Government of Iran, whose representative also mentioned the fact that the ICC is not doing its job in Afghanistan.

When one looks at the document, it actually provides a very comprehensive overview of what it is that we need to do, of the nature of the challenges that are being faced and of how we all have an obligation to work together at a time when a message of solidarity with the women and the men of Afghanistan is critically important. There is an entire section on regional cooperation.

Everyone recognizes that the tragedy of Afghanistan is that there is such an opportunity for Afghanistan to be a profitable, prosperous and engaged community — educated, globally oriented and a

regional leader — with the participation of partners in Central Asia — Iran, Pakistan and India — to create that dream. This is possible. What is holding it back? I do not think an objective observer could say that what is holding it back is the fact that it has been the subject of such difficult violence over the past 20 or 30 years, alone. I would say that this is a factor, but it cannot be the only factor.

The one thing that the representative from Russia did not mention in this document, the one thing he did not mention in his speech is that of the 193 countries that are Members of the United Nations, only the provisional Government of Afghanistan has decided that girls will not be allowed to go to school and that women will not be given the opportunity to work outside the home, unless accompanied by somebody going in and out and all of their other requirements. In particular, I would say as a non-Muslim, no other Muslim country — that I have heard — considers that to be a legitimate practice of Islam. The representative of Iran talked very clearly just before me at this rostrum. Representatives from Pakistan, Malaysia and from all over the world all agree. This is not some religious requirement. It is a political doctrine that places women several hundred years back in time and refuses to allow women to participate fully in the life of their country. To say to a 12-year-old girl, “Your brother can go to school, but you cannot go to school” is not acceptable. How can we accept that? How can we, as the General Assembly, say that this is not a bad thing. The Russian Federation would not stand for it. The women of the Russian Federation would not stand for it for one second.

I think we have an obligation, not just a choice, but an obligation to support this draft resolution. I would recommend that anyone who has doubts as a result of what they have been told was either in or not in the document to read it. They have nothing to lose by reading the document and then deciding for themselves whether this is some Western invention or some expression of imperialism. The equal rights of women is not an invention of any one country. It does not come from any one part of the world. The equality of women and the openness to the world is a decision that is made by every single country in this place when they join the Organization. When a country signs up for the Charter of the United Nations, that is what it is signing up for. That is what the United Nations does. And whether those United Nations officials are coming from China or Egypt or Estonia or any of the countries

that are here today, they are not doing so in the name of Western imperialism. They are doing it in the name of humanity. And in the name of humanity, which we share, we cannot turn our backs on the women and on all the people of Afghanistan.

Ms. Skoczek (Poland): Poland aligns itself with the statement made by the representative of the European Union.

As one of the co-sponsors of draft resolution A/77/L.11, Poland encourages all Member States to vote in favour of it. We thank and congratulate Germany for its successful facilitation.

Over 14 months after the violent rise to power by the Taliban, it is evident that the de facto Afghan authorities have failed to meet most of their commitments with regard to sharing power with Afghan religious and ethnic minorities, protecting human rights and preventing Afghanistan from becoming a safe haven for international terrorist groups. The lack of international recognition of the de facto Government is a clear indication that the international community is not willing to resume diplomatic relations with a regime that is not representative of the whole population of Afghanistan and does not respect basic human rights.

Poland is particularly concerned about the dire humanitarian situation and the reluctance of the Taliban regime to render the political system more inclusive. We are also worried about continuing human rights restrictions and violations, including the institutionalized and systematic oppression of Afghan women. According to alarming reports by human rights mechanisms and civil society organizations, the human rights situation in Afghanistan is marked by a staggering extent of violations and abuses. Millions of Afghans need humanitarian assistance and are affected by global food insecurity. Among them, women and children — as is usually the case — are disproportionately affected.

The systemic and systematic oppression of Afghan women is a cause for great concern. All aspects of women’s and girls’ lives are systematically deteriorating. Infringements on their freedom of movement and the curtailment of their political and economic rights are compounded by growing discrimination and violence. But it is hard to add to what my colleague just said from this rostrum a moment ago.

Poland is especially concerned with the ban on secondary schooling for Afghan girls. Blocking access to education is not only a blatant violation of the human rights of the affected individuals, but also a far-reaching detriment to Afghan society as a whole. Poland is an active founding member of the Group of Friends of Women in Afghanistan, established in 2019 at the initiative of the United Kingdom and Qatar. Together with our fellow members, we are fully committed to the same cause. We use this informal Group to generate political momentum and further promote the full, equal and meaningful enjoyment of human rights by Afghan women and girls.

For all those reasons, during the fifty-first session of the Human Rights Council, Poland and the other member States of the European Union facilitated a resolution on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, which the Council adopted on 7 October 2022 (A/HRC/51/20). The aim of the resolution was, *inter alia*, to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and to strengthen it, including with regard to the protection of children's human rights. The resolution firmly reiterated the call for an immediate end to all violations and abuses of international human rights law and international humanitarian law in Afghanistan.

It should be emphasized that the lack of rapprochement between Afghanistan and the international community is holding back the process of restoring much-needed economic and trade relations, as well as international development assistance. That in turn translates into missed opportunities in terms of enhancing regional connectivity and trade links in Central and South Asia, strengthening food and energy security, boosting economic growth, creating jobs and securing the livelihoods that the Afghan population deserves.

As far as international engagement in Afghanistan is concerned, the United Nations has a critical role to play. Poland reaffirms its strong support for United Nations leadership in the peace, humanitarian, development and human rights efforts in Afghanistan. We also welcome the appointment of Ms. Roza Otunbayeva as Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). We commend UNAMA's uninterrupted presence on the ground and all of its efforts focused on the implementation of its political, humanitarian and human rights mandate. We

express our appreciation to all United Nations personnel in Afghanistan for their unwavering commitment in extremely challenging conditions.

Mrs. Narváez Ojeda (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): My country thanks the Secretary-General for his report on the situation in Afghanistan (A/77/340) and follow-up on the implementation of the mandate of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). The report examines the increase in humanitarian needs that has resulted from the country's severe economic decline and a devastating combination of several factors — decades of conflict, prolonged vulnerability and recent earthquakes and recurring natural hazards affecting some 24 million people, or 59 per cent of the estimated population.

Human rights violations against women and girls have been steadily increasing. Despite the fact that the *de facto* authorities initially promised that women would be able to exercise their rights, including the right to work and study, they have systematically excluded women and girls from public life. Chile notes with deep concern that just over a year after the Taliban's takeover of *de facto* control of Afghanistan, on 15 August 2021, severe restrictions continue to be imposed on the fundamental rights and freedoms of Afghan women and girls, including a ban on secondary education, making Afghanistan the only country that denies girls the full right to education.

According to the report published by UNAMA on 20 July on the human rights situation in Afghanistan, covering the first 10 months after the Taliban took power in 2021, it is clear that Afghan women and girls continue to be particularly affected by the disparate implementation of the directives issued by the *de facto* authorities. Together, those decrees have created a restrictive environment for women and girls in every aspect of life. Restrictions on women's movement and bodies continue to worsen. In May, the Taliban decreed that women must cover their faces in public and instructed them to stay at home unless absolutely necessary. Women were banned from traveling long distances without a male chaperone, and unaccompanied women are increasingly denied access to essential services. In general, the informal surveillance of women by families, communities and employers, who often act that way out of fear of the possible consequences of not adhering to the gender-specific guidelines, has increased. In addition, the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights

noted in his September report (A/HRC/51/6) that children's rights organizations in Afghanistan have reported a sharp increase in child marriage owing to the worsening economic and humanitarian crisis and the lack of educational and professional opportunities for women and girls.

Chile thanks Germany for its leadership as the facilitator of draft resolution A/77/L.11, on the situation in Afghanistan, and shares the repugnance and indignation at the damage that the measures I have described do to the population in general, and especially women and girls. Decades of progress in gender equality and women's rights vanished in just a few months. I would like to cite a conversation between the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and a woman in Kabul, as documented in his report, which gives an account of the hopelessness of millions of women in Afghanistan. She told him that

"Afghan women know what it means to be resilient and strong, we have endured pain and hardship for years during the conflict, we have buried our sons and daughters, but the pain and fear we feel today for ourselves and our daughters' futures, while feeling forgotten by the international community, is a pain much worse." (A/HRC/51/6, para. 21)

Afghan women and girls must know that they are not alone and that the international community has not forgotten them. We have a continuing obligation and responsibility to defend their rights and amplify their voices.

Mrs. Alhefeiti (United Arab Emirates) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, the United Arab Emirates aligns itself with the statement delivered by the representative of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

I thank the delegation of the Federal Republic of Germany for facilitating the negotiations on the draft resolution entitled "The situation in Afghanistan" (A/77/L.11).

More than a year after the Taliban took power in Kabul, the situation in Afghanistan is still a source of concern, especially with regard to the people's increasing humanitarian needs and the country's economic regression, with continued discrimination against women and girls, who are being deprived of their right to participate fully, meaningfully and equally in society. There is further concern about the continued

threats from terrorist groups in Afghanistan, which are affecting security and stability in the country and the region as a whole. The international community must continue its efforts to prevent Afghanistan from turning into a safe haven for terrorists. The de facto authorities should engage in serious and meaningful dialogue with the international community to combat terrorism and establish security in Afghanistan. The United Arab Emirates underscores the importance of making every effort to establishing security in Afghanistan and helping it to achieve stability and development so that it can meet the hopes and ambitions of the friendly Afghan people. Realistically and practically speaking, the channels of communication with the de facto authorities must be kept open if tangible results are to be achieved.

My country supports the calls of the international community on the de facto Afghan authorities, including through the draft resolution under consideration today, to relinquish the policies and practices restricting the rights of Afghan women and girls. We emphasize that such restrictions run counter to all religious precepts, humanitarian values and principles. The issue of women's participation and girls' access to education is not an option but rather a necessity for achieving development and prosperity in Afghanistan. The United Nations Development Programme has noted that the Afghan economy lost nearly \$5 billion in a single year, and it will be difficult to recover that loss if women are not allowed to effectively contribute to their community and girls are not granted their right to education. We emphasize the important role played by the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in that regard. Issues pertaining to women's rights in Afghanistan will not be addressed without taking into account the cultural and religious contexts in the country.

The United Arab Emirates reiterates the importance of uniting international efforts to provide humanitarian assistance and launch education initiatives to build a more stable and prosperous future for the Afghan people. In line with our historical role supporting international efforts in Afghanistan and the Afghan people, we recently signed a memorandum of understanding with the International Committee of the Red Cross to provide assistance amounting to \$4 million to cover the operational and administrative costs of hospitals in Afghanistan. We have also provided more than \$1.7 billion to facilitate air bridges providing food and medical assistance to the Afghan people, especially

women and children. And the United Arab Emirates has played an essential role in the evacuation of nearly 50,000 Afghans and foreign nationals since August of last year. We will continue collaborating with our regional partners and the international community to facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance to the Afghan people.

I would like to mention that the dire humanitarian crisis demands that the Afghan economy be reinvigorated by taking measures to increase the country's liquidity and facilitate its financial transactions and banking services. That can be done in collaboration with international financing institutions and the relevant stakeholders to alleviate the constraints imposed on Afghanistan and take the necessary measures to support the financial sector. We are all aware that humanitarian assistance is not a sustainable solution and that revitalizing various sectors of the Afghan economy will help to reduce the people's humanitarian needs.

Since its current membership in the Security Council began, the United Arab Emirates has worked with all the other Council members to encourage the international community to respond to the serious challenges facing Afghanistan and ensure a practical and constructive approach to that end. We therefore look forward to finding ways to support the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), headed by the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, including by upholding its strong mandate during the upcoming Security Council negotiations next March. That is a vital issue, as UNAMA plays an active role on the ground. International efforts must also be coordinated to improve the situation of the Afghan people.

In conclusion, the United Arab Emirates reiterates its commitment to supporting the Afghan people and to participating constructively in the Security Council and the General Assembly, or through regional and international arrangements, to improve the situation in Afghanistan.

Mr. Zellenrath (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands aligns itself with the statement made earlier on behalf of the European Union.

Let me start by expressing our appreciation to Germany for submitting draft resolution A/77/L.11. It is a balanced text, and it sends a clear message of support to the Afghan people. Since the last time we discussed this resolution in this forum, two years ago

(see A/75/PV.40), the situation in Afghanistan has obviously changed dramatically. The human rights situation, particularly for women and girls, has further deteriorated, as we heard clearly from the Special Rapporteur two weeks ago. Media outlets are being shut down, tremendously limiting access to information. The economy has shrunk, and millions of people are facing hunger this winter again. And while security incidents have decreased, the Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant and Al-Qaida are very much present in Afghanistan today. The de facto authorities are not taking the necessary steps that will enable them to be recognized as a responsible Government by either the Afghan people or the international community. We see disappointingly little progress on important issues, such as girls' right to education. Let me be clear. The plethora of challenges in Afghanistan cannot be solved without an inclusive Government that represents all Afghan people.

History has shown us that isolating Afghanistan is not an option. Instability in Afghanistan will spill over in our interconnected world. It is key to ensure that we keep Afghanistan on our minds and on our agendas. It is key that we continue to talk with people in Afghanistan on how best to support them. And it is key to continue to put pressure on the de facto authorities to do better, much better. Sustainable and lasting peace requires full respect for civil, political, economic and cultural rights, as well as a commitment to inclusive and representative governance. The Netherlands is therefore proud to be a sponsor of today's draft resolution, and we encourage all Member States to vote in favour of it.

Mr. Aldehani (Kuwait) (*spoke in Arabic*): At the outset, I would like to express our deep thanks and appreciation to the President for convening this important meeting under agenda item 34, entitled "The situation in Afghanistan", against a backdrop of rapidly evolving developments in Afghanistan.

My delegation also associates itself with the statement delivered by the Permanent Representative of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia on behalf of the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council.

I would like to highlight some of the efforts made by the State of Kuwait on the political side and the negotiation track among the relevant parties, and at the relief and logistical levels with regard to evacuation processes. Given the enormity of the humanitarian crisis, since 4 August 2021 my country has engaged

over many weeks with a number of others to evacuate nearly 15,000 people of 32 different nationalities through our territory in order to facilitate the safe passage of all individuals and ensure their arrival at their final destinations.

On the relief front, and in line with our firm commitment to supporting humanitarian action and contributing to peacebuilding and communal security, the State of Kuwait has provided humanitarian assistance to the friendly Afghan people amounting to more than \$92 million in total, most recently in March at a high-level pledging conference to support the humanitarian situation in Afghanistan, where we pledged \$10 million as Kuwait's official contribution. We have contributed an additional \$5 million through the various specialized United Nations agencies and the International Committee of the Red Cross. I would also like to mention the basic relief assistance that various charity institutions and associations in the State of Kuwait have been providing, based on their belief in the importance of supporting the Afghan people and in meeting their basic needs. Kuwait will continue collaborating and working closely with international relief organizations, especially given the approaching winter season and its impact on the humanitarian and food-security situations in Afghanistan.

With regard to the political track and the negotiation process, the State of Kuwait, through its participation in various regional and international meetings, has emphasized the importance of meeting the basic needs of the Afghan people and implementing development programmes that have a direct impact on Afghanistan's stability and comprehensive security.

In conclusion, I would once again like to thank the President for convening this meeting. We reaffirm the commitment of the State of Kuwait to continue working with various regional and international humanitarian actors and participating in relevant regional and international meetings and sessions.

Mr. Tamaura (Japan): Allow me to begin by expressing our gratitude for convening today's debate at this critical juncture for Afghanistan. We would also like to thank the delegation of Germany for its leading role in facilitating the consultations on the draft resolution.

Japan is pleased to co-sponsor draft resolution A/77/L.11. We believe the draft resolution comprehensively covers all aspects of the challenges that Afghanistan faces.

Although we take note of certain developments since the Taliban's takeover in August last year, namely security, anti-corruption measures and humanitarian access, the Taliban are far from fulfilling the commitments they made to the Afghan people. There is much work to be done, including building an inclusive political system, while listening to the voices of all Afghan people, respecting the rights of all Afghans, including women, children and minorities, and completely cutting ties with terrorism.

Addressing those issues will benefit the Taliban themselves and is the best way to gain the trust of the international community and secure the resources and assistance necessary to rebuild the country. We have been repeatedly emphasizing that point in our engagement with the Taliban.

Japan has been standing by the Afghan people. Since the Taliban takeover in August 2021, Japan has provided support for humanitarian and basic human needs in Afghanistan and neighbouring countries totalling \$200 million.

I would like to conclude by reiterating Japan's continued commitment to Afghanistan, particularly when Japan will be taking a seat as an elected member of the Security Council starting from January. We will do our utmost to support the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan in its work towards peace and stability in the country.

Ms. Moran (Ireland): Ireland aligns itself with the statement made on behalf of the European Union.

We want to thank Germany for draft resolution A/77/L.11 and its constructive facilitation of the text. As a member of the core group, Ireland actively participated in the negotiations. The adoption by consensus of the draft resolution would reflect a significant recognition of the importance of speaking with one voice to the people of Afghanistan and to the Taliban.

Ireland remains deeply concerned about the situation in Afghanistan. The violence, abuse, subjugation and hunger suffered by millions of Afghans, greatly exacerbated by the Taliban's seizure of power, should trouble every member of the Assembly. Today's edicts banning women from Kabul's public parks and funfairs are but the most recent devastating example of the Taliban's disdain for Afghan women.

The draft resolution reflects that deep concern about the human rights situation in Afghanistan, particularly those of women and girls and minorities. It further reiterates our collective commitment to the importance of inclusive, representative and participatory Government — one that includes the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of Afghan women.

As winter approaches, the need to respond to Afghanistan's growing humanitarian crisis is all the more urgent. Sustained support from the international community remains vital, including, as the draft resolution recognizes, critical humanitarian assistance and basic needs.

As a member of the Security Council, Ireland has been steadfast in its support to the work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and the United Nations country team in Afghanistan. Their work in support of the Afghan people, against the Taliban's growing repression, is more critical than ever. So, too, is the important work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, shedding light on the horrors being visited on the Afghan people.

In conclusion, today's draft resolution is an important articulation of our responsibility as the international community to the Afghan people — our responsibility to call out human rights abuses and violations and insist on the upholding of the inalienable rights of the Afghan people.

As we call on all members of the General Assembly to uphold that responsibility, we must also call on the Taliban to be accountable and to take responsibility for the suffering and challenges facing the Afghan people since the takeover by force of the country.

Mr. Malovrh (Slovenia): Slovenia aligns itself with the statement delivered on behalf of the European Union and would like to add a few points in its national capacity.

First, allow me to thank the German team for its efforts in facilitating the process leading to the text of draft resolution A/77/L.11. That has particular significance this year, reflecting the change in circumstances on the ground. I would also like to express Slovenia's strong support for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA). It is important for UNAMA to maintain an active presence in the country and for all actors in Afghanistan to

ensure a safe and secure environment for its work, as mandated by Security Council resolution 2626 (2022), adopted on 17 March.

Among the issues about which Slovenia remains extremely concerned are the challenging humanitarian situation and the hardship that the population of Afghanistan faces, which is worsened by increasing restrictions on human rights, especially those of women and girls. All humanitarian operations need safe and unhindered access to the entire territory to provide urgent assistance to all those in need.

The human rights situation in Afghanistan has worsened dramatically, in particular for women and girls. We call for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls in public life, their right to education, work and employment, access to health care and services, as well as their right to movement, expression and assembly.

In the past year, Slovenia has contributed almost a half a million euros for the humanitarian needs of the Afghan people, through a number of international partners and United Nations funds and agencies, including the United Nations Population Fund, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the World Food Programme and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Slovenia has maintained a continuous presence in Afghanistan since 2014 through ITF Enhancing Human Security, a humanitarian non-profit organization established by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia. That organization has since carried out various projects, predominately in the field of mine action, and despite complex circumstances on the ground, has remained present in Afghanistan, including after August 2021.

Slovenia is also an active donor in the field of victim assistance and in the health sector, through direct support to the Mine Detection Centre Polyclinic in Kabul. The services of that clinic are free of charge and encompass the full spectrum of services ranging from physical health to psychosocial counselling for all segments of the Afghan population. In October, with the support of other donor countries, ITF Enhancing Human Security began to implement a second victims assistance project aimed at providing emergency mobile physical rehabilitation and psychosocial support across the Kabul, Kandahar and Nimroz provinces.

In conclusion, we are convinced that the adoption of the draft resolution will provide an updated political, humanitarian and development framework for future dialogue with and on Afghanistan so as to address the needs of the Afghan people.

Mr. Croker (United Kingdom): The magnitude of the challenges the Afghan people face requires a resolute and unified response by the international community. More than 28 million people are in humanitarian need, and approximately 20 million people are acutely food insecure. If food assistance is not sustained, we risk the emergence of famine-like conditions.

In recent months, some Member States have attempted to exploit the crisis to score political points. They have tried to sow division where unity is required, while, at the same time, failing to contribute to the chronically underfunded United Nations humanitarian response plan.

For its part, in the last financial year, the United Kingdom disbursed \$325 million in humanitarian and development assistance to Afghanistan, and we have committed a further \$325 million this financial year. We are the second largest donor to the World Bank's Afghanistan Reconstruction Fund, and we are leading efforts with the World Bank and others on economic stabilization.

However, Afghanistan's problems will not be resolved unless the fundamental building blocks for stability are put into place. As a first step, this requires that the Taliban uphold rather than repress human rights. The economic cost of women's and girls' exclusion from political, economic, educational and social spaces is stark. The human cost is starker still.

The same is true of ethnic division. Inclusive governance and protection of minorities is vital for a stable and prosperous society. Yet we are gravely concerned at the risk of atrocity crimes, including against such minorities as the Hazara. The Special Rapporteur has warned of abuses that show all the hallmarks of crimes against humanity. These must be investigated.

And the Taliban must play a direct role in stabilizing the economy. This includes ensuring transparency with regard to revenue and the budget as well as re-establishing an independent Central Bank with the right expertise.

Today's meeting provides Member States with the opportunity to stand in solidarity with the Afghan people. But our solidarity is insufficient. We must continue to support economic stabilization while standing firm on holding the Taliban to its commitments, including on counter-terrorism and the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms.

Mr. Zhang Jun (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): Afghanistan is a country that has experienced vicissitudes and hardships. With the hasty withdrawal of foreign troops last year, the 20-year-long war in Afghanistan came to an end in chaos. Now, Afghanistan has entered a new phase of recovery and healing, and the country faces the long and arduous task of peaceful reconstruction. History has once again proved that military intervention and external models do not work. The future of Afghanistan must be in the hands of the Afghan people themselves. All parties should not just pay lip service to the mantra "Afghan-led and Afghan-owned" but should really keep it in mind and put it into practice.

We should encourage the Afghan authorities to build a broad and inclusive political structure, eradicate the breeding ground for terrorism and explore a governance model consistent with Afghanistan's national conditions. This is bound to be a gradual and endogenously driven progress. The international community should therefore maintain reasonable expectations and demonstrate the necessary patience.

Afghanistan faces a severe humanitarian and economic situation, with more than half of its population living in hunger and in dire need of humanitarian assistance, and with women and children bearing the brunt. As the cold season approaches, the international community must race against time with immediate action to help the Afghan people get through the harsh winter by sending them warmth and hope.

The rights of Afghan women and girls to education and employment should be guaranteed. We hope that the Afghan Taliban will make greater efforts to this end in order to respond to the concerns of the international community. At the same time, humanitarian aid should not be politicized, nor should it be tethered to other issues.

Twenty years of war have ended, but the effects are still lingering. To this day, tens of millions of landmines remain buried in Afghanistan, leaving no place safe. Foreign troops have abandoned large quantities of

weapons and equipment, which have made their way onto the black market. With regard to the investigation into and accountability for the crimes committed by foreign troops in Afghanistan, the Afghan people are waiting for an answer. Countries that bear the primary responsibility for the current situation must earnestly reflect on and rectify their mistakes in a timely manner. Cutting off development assistance and imposing political blockades and isolation will not solve the problem, but will instead intensify the Afghan people's plight.

The overseas assets of Afghanistan are the sovereign property of the country; they are life-saving money for the Afghan people. The full amount should be returned to Afghanistan immediately and put at the disposal of its people themselves to be used for reconstruction and the improvement of livelihoods. This is the general wish of the Afghan people, the widespread expectation of the international community and the embodiment of fairness and justice.

As a neighbour of Afghanistan, China has always actively supported the peaceful development of Afghanistan. In the past year, the Chinese Government has provided 300 million yuan in emergency aid to Afghanistan and actively fulfilled its pledge to provide 1 billion yuan in bilateral aid. We have also actively expanded economic and trade cooperation with Afghanistan and imported more than a 1,000 tons of pine nuts from the country through the pine-nut air corridor, which helps the Afghan people generate more income.

Next month, China will exempt tariffs on 98 per cent of timber products from Afghanistan. This is another important initiative to help the people of Afghanistan earn more income. China will continue to work with the international community to support Afghan participation in regional cooperation and connectivity with a view to unleashing their geopolitical advantages and achieving stability and prosperity at an early date.

The General Assembly is about to take action on the draft resolution on the situation in Afghanistan (A/77/L.11). We always expect the annual General Assembly resolution to comprehensively and objectively reflect the situation in Afghanistan, send out a strong signal of international solidarity and demonstrate rock-firm international support for Afghanistan in its efforts to overcome its difficulties, improve people's livelihoods and restore development.

Regrettably, the text of the draft resolution is unbalanced, in particular on such issues as unfreezing overseas Afghan assets, investigating foreign troops' crimes committed in Afghanistan and the proliferation risk associated with weapons that were abandoned in the country. These issues are real and important. The General Assembly resolution should not lose sight of them.

In addition, regional organizations play a unique role in Afghanistan and have been making positive contributions to peace and stability there. However, certain Member States refused to let the draft resolution make reference to the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, the Collective Security Treaty Organization and other major regional organizations involved in Afghanistan. As a result, many important elements are absent.

It was hoped that the sponsors would take a balanced approach to the legitimate concerns of all parties with greater objectivity and impartiality and abandon their persistently lopsided preference for the position of certain countries. China will continue to work with other countries to make more contributions to peace, stability and development in Afghanistan.

The Acting President: I now give the floor to the observer of the Sovereign Order of Malta.

Mr. Mc Guire (Sovereign Order of Malta): I think that we would all agree that our educational opportunities have contributed to our being here today. The creativity and innovation that are rapidly shaping our planet for the better have all been exercised through education and the remarkable capabilities of humans have all been nurtured by education. As a Catholic entity, the Sovereign Order of Malta views the acquisition of knowledge as a lifelong and life-wide enterprise.

Reflective self-directed learning and teaching provide conditions for teachers and students to interiorize knowledge. It is therefore no wonder that Benjamin Franklin famously said that investment in education pays the best interest, and, as His Eminence Cardinal Parolin stated during the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly, that investment in education is one of the most effective ways of making our world and history more human.

Despite that, the Secretary-General's report (A/77/340) solemnly confirms that the ban on secondary education for females makes Afghanistan the only

country in the world to deny girls their full right to education. What is more, according to Save the Children, 27 per cent of the Afghan youth are engaged in child labour instead of learning. Sustainable Development Goals 4 and 5 are clearly not being fulfilled in the country of Afghanistan. As former Secretary-General Kofi Annan stated in 2003,

“Study after study has taught us that there is no tool for development more effective than the education of girls. If we are to succeed in our efforts to build a more healthy, peaceful and equitable world, the classrooms of the world have to be full of girls, as well as boys. Every year of schooling completed by them will be a step towards eradicating poverty and disease”.

The words “fundamental human rights” remain some of the most commonly used words within these walls. Why is that? It is because we are all witness to those fundamental human rights being denied to a distressingly large number of people across the world. Save the Children found that 19.7 million children and adults — almost 50 per cent of the population of Afghanistan — are going hungry, with 5 million children being one step away from famine. In addition to that, 55 per cent of the population continues to live in poverty. Combating that through our international relief agency, Malteser International, the Sovereign Order of Malta continues to provide urgent humanitarian aid to internally displaced persons in and around Kabul and supports refugees through its teams in Pakistan, as urged by the United Nations a year ago.

We have all come to accept that we are now at the tipping point of whether or not we will achieve the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development; hence the reason that this day, this week and this year are so important to the future of our planet and to our people. While some people may believe that those goals are unattainable, we still have a choice. That choice is to either succeed or fail. The current geopolitical landscape, which is home to more than 100 million forcibly displaced people, 27 ongoing conflicts, 13,000 nuclear warheads and 690 million people living in extreme poverty, desperately needs every nation to fully harness the themes of the seventy-seventh session of the General Assembly: solidarity, sustainability and science. If we are serious about creating a sustainable future where no one is left behind, then action-orientated responses, accountability and global transparency are all tools that we need to continue to implement across

every aspect of the United Nations and within our own domestic policies.

The Sovereign Order of Malta strongly affirms its belief in the right to education as one of the most powerful solutions in creating a sustainable future, and it is greatly distressed by the findings from within Afghanistan. With that, I would like to echo the words of yet another former Secretary-General, Ban Ki-Moon, when he noted:

“Education is a fundamental right and the basis for progress in every country. Prosperous countries depend on skilled and educated workers. The challenges of conquering poverty, combating climate change and achieving truly sustainable development in the coming decades compel us to work together. With partnership, leadership and wise investments in education, we can transform individual lives, national economies and our world.”

The Sovereign Order of Malta commends the steps taken by the United Nations to implement the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan. That truly is a positive and reliable means of providing insight into ongoing developments from within. Steps such as those need to continue to be proposed, encouraged and implemented by the international community.

The Acting President: I call on the representative of the Russian Federation on a point of order.

Ms. Evstigneeva (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): In connection with the notable mistakes in the English interpretation of the final part of our statement, I must repeat myself. I hope that this statement will be transmitted correctly.

We deeply regret that, due to the inherently biased positions that favour certain Western countries and to the blatant disregard of proposals supported by regional States, draft resolution A/77/L.11 is unbalanced. I will also add here that, after the past 20 years, Afghanistan is in a dire situation, with women unable to work or study, so they are forced to sell their organs and their children just to feed their families. Considering this, it is irresponsible to try to cover up the fact that the West is responsible for what is happening and to refuse to consider the real steps that we could take to improve the situation, in particular by releasing assets.

In that regard, we are compelled to put the draft resolution to a vote. We stress the fact that, despite the situation concerning the draft resolution, we continue

to support Afghanistan and its people at such an important time for them. Our vote should be interpreted as nothing other than disapproval of the actions and working methods of the informal co-penholders on the dossier.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in the debate on this item.

The Assembly will now take a decision on the draft resolution A/77/L.11, entitled “The situation in Afghanistan”. The draft resolution has now closed for e-sponsorship.

I give the floor to the representative of the Secretariat.

Mr. Nakano (Department for General Assembly and Conference Management): I should like to announce that, since the submission of the draft resolution, and in addition to those delegations listed in the document, the following countries have also become sponsors of draft resolution A/77/L.11: Andorra, Australia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, the Dominican Republic, Finland, Hungary, Japan, Kuwait, Latvia, Lichtenstein, Lithuania, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, New Zealand, North Macedonia, Palau, Poland, Portugal, the Republic of Korea, Romania, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Slovakia, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Türkiye, Ukraine and Vanuatu.

The Acting President: A recorded vote has been requested.

A recorded vote was taken.

In favour:

Afghanistan, Albania, Algeria, Andorra, Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bahrain, Bangladesh, Belgium, Bhutan, Bolivia (Plurinational State of), Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Brunei Darussalam, Bulgaria, Cambodia, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Czechia, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Egypt, El Salvador, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Ghana, Greece, Guatemala, Honduras, Hungary, Iceland, India, Indonesia, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Iraq, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kuwait, Kyrgyzstan, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Latvia, Libya, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Madagascar, Malawi, Malaysia, Maldives, Malta, Mauritius, Mexico, Monaco, Mongolia, Montenegro, Morocco, Mozambique,

Myanmar, Nepal, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, North Macedonia, Norway, Oman, Palau, Panama, Paraguay, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Republic of Korea, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, San Marino, Saudi Arabia, Senegal, Serbia, Singapore, Slovakia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Suriname, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Thailand, Timor-Leste, Togo, Türkiye, Tuvalu, Ukraine, United Arab Emirates, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America, Uruguay, Uzbekistan, Viet Nam, Yemen

Against:

None

Abstaining:

Belarus, Burundi, China, Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Ethiopia, Guinea, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russian Federation, Zimbabwe

Draft resolution A/77/L.11 was adopted by 116 votes to none, with 10 abstentions (resolution 77/10).

[Subsequently, the delegations of Costa Rica, Micronesia (Federated States of) and Tunisia informed the Secretariat that they had intended to vote in favour.]

The Acting President: Before giving the floor to speakers in explanation of vote after the voting, I would like to remind delegations that explanations of vote are limited to 10 minutes and should be made by representatives from their seats.

I now give the floor to the representative of Pakistan.

Mr. Khan (Pakistan): Pakistan abstained in the voting on resolution 77/10, on Afghanistan.

We participated actively in the informal consultations and appreciate that some of our suggestions were accommodated by Germany and the resolution's co-sponsors. We welcome the acknowledgement of Pakistan's role in hosting Afghan refugees and facilitating evacuations from Afghanistan. We also welcome the recognition of the threats to Afghanistan's immediate neighbours, the call on Afghanistan to take concrete steps against all terrorist organizations, the caution expressed against attempts to derail peace and stability in Afghanistan, the need for the sustained engagement of the international community with Afghanistan, the importance of regional-connectivity projects, the acknowledgement of the general amnesty

measures and the ban on opium cultivation announced by Afghanistan. Pakistan welcomes the resolution's call for commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Afghanistan and the need to overcome the security challenges. We also endorse the expressed desire to ensure the protection of human rights, including the rights of women and girls, to promote inclusive governance and to eliminate terrorism within and from Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, the resolution remains unbalanced and, in several respects, unrealistic. It does not acknowledge that there is a de facto new Government in Afghanistan. It does not delineate any process to promote normalization in Afghanistan through a process of engagement with the de facto Government. There is no commitment to unfreeze Afghanistan's national reserves, and no commitment to help Afghanistan's economic recovery beyond humanitarian assistance.

In particular, Pakistan is disappointed that one delegation was allowed to block references to the

specific mention of terrorist organizations, including the Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, as well as references to the role and contributions of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation to peace and stability in Afghanistan.

We therefore do not consider this resolution's provisions as sufficiently comprehensive or realistic as a framework for promoting the objectives of peace, security, development and human rights in Afghanistan. While acknowledging the efforts of the co-sponsors, for those reasons my delegation must abstained in the voting on this resolution.

The Acting President: We have heard the only speaker in explanation of vote after the voting.

May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of agenda item 34?

It was so decided.

The meeting rose at 1.05 p.m.