



PERMANENT MISSION
OF ESTONIA TO THE UN



Permanent Mission of Norway
to the United Nations



Permanent Mission
of the Federal Republic of Germany
to the United Nations
New York



PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF INDONESIA
TO THE UNITED NATIONS
NEW YORK



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan
to the United Nations



Permanent Mission of Finland
to the United Nations



Concept Note

The United Nations Security Council Arria Formula Meeting on the Peace Process in Afghanistan

The United Nations Security Council members Estonia, Germany, Indonesia, together with additional co-sponsors Afghanistan, Finland, Norway and Qatar will hold a high-level virtual Arria Formula meeting on the theme *“What can the Security Council do to support the peace process in Afghanistan?”*

20 November 2020 9.00 – 12.00 (EST)

Venue : Videoconference (supported by Global Virtual Solutions)

OBJECTIVES

The meeting provides an opportunity to discuss the situation in Afghanistan, with a focus on the peace process. As the UN Security Council has a responsibility in the prevention of violent conflict and war, this meeting seeks to identify ways in which Security Council members and the international community can support the Afghanistan Peace Negotiations and ensure the maintenance of peace and stability for post-war Afghanistan. The meeting also highlights the importance of the upcoming 2020 Afghanistan Conference in Geneva on future civilian assistance to Afghanistan.

BACKGROUND

In February 2020, the United States signed the “Agreement for Bringing Peace to Afghanistan” with the Taliban, paving the way for intra-Afghan peace negotiations. The start of the Afghanistan Peace Negotiations on 12 September in Doha represents a significant step forward in the efforts to end decades of conflict. However, lasting peace in the country is far from guaranteed. The general conditions needed for a sustainable political settlement, permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and national reconciliation have yet to be met. The unacceptably high level of violence and civilian casualties remain outstanding issues. According to the Secretary General’s latest report, there were over 2000 armed clashes during a mere two-month period, which remains a staggering number. Moreover, the conflict continues to take a heavy toll on women and children. The entire International community, the UN Secretary-General and the Security Council have repeatedly called for a global ceasefire.

Although the peace process must remain Afghan-owned and Afghan-led, with negotiations seemingly at an impasse, the international community and particularly the United Nations have a responsibility to step up their support to the fragile peace process. It is also pertinent for the

international community to encourage parties to the negotiations to continue pursuing confidence-building measures including through a substantial reduction of violence. Further, the international community encourages parties to the negotiations to engage in good faith with the aim of a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and an inclusive political settlement to end the conflict in Afghanistan while preserving the achievements made over the past 19 years concerning human rights of all Afghans, the democracy and the Republic.

Additionally, the voices of women, youth, minorities and victims of war need to be better heard which requires their meaningful and effective participation and preservation of their constitutional rights in the negotiations and in all stages of the peace process. **This meeting will provide the Security Council and the international community with a chance to discuss and support the peace initiative and to show solidarity with all people of Afghanistan.**

The start of the peace process also has direct implications for the 2020 Afghanistan Conference, presenting a valuable opportunity for the Afghan Government and the international community to commit to building a peaceful, stable, secure and increasingly self-reliant Afghanistan. The government has taken concrete steps by presenting a new draft Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework for 2021-2025 and working with its development partners on a new Partnership Framework that provide a vision for a stable, inclusive and prosperous country well integrated with the wider region.

During the meeting, the international community will be briefed on how to maximise this historic opportunity by voicing their expectations for and their commitment to a post-conflict Afghanistan with a focus on building on and sustaining the shared gains achieved in the past 19 years including the human rights and constitutional rights of women, girls and minorities.

FORMAT

- The debate will be chaired by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Estonia, H.E. Urmas Reinsalu and followed by introductory remarks of Minister of Foreign Affairs of Afghanistan H.E. Mohammed Haneef Atmar.
- Keynote speech by H.E. Mohammad Ashraf Ghani, President of the I.R. of Afghanistan.
- Statements by Co-sponsors:
H.E. Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Qatar; H.E. Pekka Haavisto, Foreign Minister of Finland; H.E. Ine Marie Eriksen Søreide, Foreign Minister of Norway; H.E. Retno L.P. Marsudi, Foreign Minister for the Republic of Indonesia.

- Briefers:
 1. *Deborah Lyons, Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan*
 2. *Fatima Gailani, member of Republican Negotiation Team and its contact group, Board Member of the Afghan Red Crescent Society.*
 3. *Laurel Miller, Asia Director, International Crisis Group.*
- Statements by UNSC members.
- Statements by incoming UNSC members.
- Q&A; Comments by the Briefers.
- Concluding remarks by H.E. Heiko Maas, Foreign Minister of Germany.

- Written statements by other UN MSs are welcome. Please send them via email to: eeunsc@mfa.ee.

The meeting will take place on Friday, 20 November 2020 starting at 9.00AM (NYC time, EST). There will be statements by co-sponsors, briefers, UNSC members and by incoming UNSC members. The briefers are invited to speak up to 7 minutes. The other interventions are limited to 3 minutes. The meeting language is English and no simultaneous translation is offered.

The UN Security Council members as well as incoming members are invited to present their questions while making their interventions and additionally are kindly asked to send their questions to the briefers by 10 AM 20 November, NYC time (EST) to the following email address: eeunsc@mfa.ee.

The Chair will prepare the Chair's Summary reflecting the interventions of the briefers and speakers. To that end, please send your statements to the email address: eeunsc@mfa.ee.

The meeting will be streamed live and opened to public via YouTube, Facebook and the homepage of the Estonian Ministry of Foreign Affairs. For any further questions, please use the following email: eeunsc@mfa.ee.