

**Statement by H.E. Mr. Naseer A. FAIQ, Charge d’Affaires of the Permanent
Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations at the
second plenary meeting of the Fifth Committee, United Nations General
Assembly
8 October 2024**

Madam Chair, Distinguished delegates,

At the outset, I would like to extend our congratulations to you and the Bureau of the Fifth Committee for your well-deserved elections.

My delegation wishes to place on record our vigorous disapproval and deep disappointment regarding Action on draft resolution A/C.5/79/L.2 and the report of the Committee on Contributions and its inability to reach an agreement on Afghanistan’s request for exemptions under Article 19. Despite the compelling justifications we have provided, which are grounded in the harsh realities that Afghanistan faces, our pleas have unfortunately been disregarded.

The Committee’s refusal to reinstate Afghanistan’s right to vote and grant an exemption under Article 19 is both deeply concerning and disheartening for my country.

We recognize the importance of Member States fulfilling their financial obligations to the United Nations. However, Afghanistan is currently enduring extraordinary political, social, and economic challenges that severely limit our capacity to meet these obligations. These challenges stem largely from the Taliban’s failure and unwillingness to address the ongoing crisis, break the impasse, and engage constructively with national and international calls for a fair, responsible, and

inclusive system of governance. This includes respect for human rights and dignity, the rightful inclusion of women in all aspects of society, and a commitment to counter-terrorism efforts. The situation has been further compounded by geopolitical tensions and the absence of a strong, cohesive international approach to addressing Afghanistan's crisis.

Our situation is not one of neglect or unwillingness, but is directly linked to circumstances beyond our control. Article 19 of the UN Charter acknowledges such cases and provides for exemptions. We firmly believe our case fully meets these criteria.

What concerns us even more is that the work of the Committee on Contributions, which is well-defined with a technical and advisory role, appears to have taken on a political dimension. While we appreciate the understanding and recommendations of some Committee members in support of our waiver request, it is regrettable that other members, particularly from the region, who are entrusted to act with independence and objectivity, have allowed political considerations to influence their decision. This has undermined the fairness of the process and raises serious concerns about the impartiality that should guide the Committee's deliberations. This was the first time we requested a waiver under Article 19 with valid justifications, and we see that it was not given proper consideration.

Afghanistan remains steadfast in its commitment to the United Nations and the principles upon which it stands. Denying us the right to vote at this critical juncture further isolates us and limits our ability to engage meaningfully in the work of this Assembly. Moreover, it sends a troubling signal that political motivations can interfere with decisions that should be made based on fairness and objectivity.

We strongly urge this Committee to reconsider our request for an exemption under Article 19, to restore Afghanistan's voting rights, and to reaffirm the principles of fairness and impartiality that are fundamental to this institution.

Before I conclude, I wish to state that since the report failed to reflect an accurate account of our oral and written statements presented before the Committee's meeting, a full copy of our statement delivered on 14th June 2024, is attached here for the record.

Thank you.

Eighty-fourth session of Committee on Contributions
Statement by Mr. Naseer Ahmad FAIQ, Charge d’Affaires
Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations
14th June 2024
10:00 a.m.

Honorable Chairperson,
Distinguished members of the Committee,

It is my honor to be here today representing the people of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan to earnestly plead our case for exemptions under Article 19 of the United Nations Charter. Our failure to make necessary payments had been attributable to conditions beyond our control, shaped by a complex web of political, social, economic and security challenges and uncertainty faced by my country. I will elaborate on these challenges which has hampered Afghanistan’s payment of its financial contributions to the UN.

Since the Taliban's forced and military takeover of Afghanistan in August 2021, the UN and the international community have not recognized the Taliban regime as the legitimate government of Afghanistan. This is largely due to the Taliban’s failure and unwillingness to address the current crisis, break the impasse and engage constructively to respond to national and international calls for fair, responsible, inclusive system of governance, policies that respect human rights and dignity, rightful inclusion of women in all aspects of society and counter-terrorism efforts—all things that they promised to the world and to the people of Afghanistan.

As Afghanistan enters its third year under Taliban’s repressive and unilateral rule, economic and humanitarian crises have deepened. Ninety-seven percent of the population is now living in poverty, and two-thirds struggling for basic survival. Hunger has affected 20 million people; unemployment has increased, and migration continues despite grave risks. A staggering 29 million people need humanitarian aid. A substantial reduction in international aid in the aftermath of the Taliban takeover has severely impacted Afghanistan's economy.

In addition, currently, Afghanistan is facing severe challenges from climate change and the country is experiencing its third consecutive year of drought. In October 2023, four magnitude 6.3 earthquakes struck Herat Province, Afghanistan, causing significant devastation with over 1,500 fatalities and 2,600 injuries. The earthquake struck communities which were already extremely vulnerable and had lived with decades of conflict, poverty and food insecurity.

In the past months, floods in the northeastern and northwestern provinces have affected over 80,000 people. Recent floods in Ghor province killed at least 50 people and damaged more than 4,000 houses and shops. Floods on May 10 and 11 in Badakhshan, Takhar, and Baghlan provinces resulted in 347 deaths, 1,651 injuries, the destruction of 7,800 houses, the loss of nearly 14,000

livestock, and damage to 24,000 hectares of land. We are grateful to the international community for funding the UN Humanitarian Response Plan for Afghanistan and to the national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) for staying and delivering the emergency and life-saving assistance and support to the people of Afghanistan.

Under Taliban rule, social conditions in Afghanistan continue to regress significantly. Taliban have reversed and undone the hard-won achievements of Afghanistan in the past two decades. They have nullified Afghanistan Constitution and national laws; disassembled Afghanistan Parliament and key institutions established for promotion and protection of fundamental rights and freedoms of Afghan citizens.

Today, Afghanistan's women and girls faced with a gender apartheid and gender persecution. It has been more than 1000 days the girls beyond six grades are deprived of educations. Women and girls are required to adhere to a strict dress code and are not permitted to travel more than 75 km without a male guardian. The Taliban is systemically violating the rights of women and young girls while regressing with time and resorting to using draconian, cruel, and inhumane practices and policies of 1990s. Female employees of non-governmental organizations and the United Nations face restrictions on their ability to work, while female protesters are subjected to daily detention and torture. Additionally, The rights and freedoms of marginalized communities have been severely curtailed and targeted killings of Shia scholars and our fellow Hazara compatriots persist.

Cultural and artistic expressions are being suppressed, stifling the rich cultural heritage of Afghanistan. The population lives in constant fear of retribution for any perceived violations of the Taliban's strict interpretation of Islamic law.

Mr. Chair,

The Taliban's grave human rights violations and abuses, including arbitrary arrests, extrajudicial killings, forced disappearances, and torture, especially among former security forces and civilians accused of being associated groups opposed to the Taliban continue to happen across Afghanistan despite their leader's decree of Amnesty. These acts along with brutal punishments, and suppression of media and civil society have made crimes against humanity and violations of international humanitarian law commonplace. Reports from UNAMA, Amnesty International, and the Special Rapporteur on Afghanistan's human rights paint a grim picture.

The Taliban who hosted the Al-Qaida leader in 1990s and have been the cause of conflict, destruction, and bloodshed in Afghanistan in the past three decades, have been ruling the country through fear and intimidation. They have not changed at all and they have established thousands

of Jehadi Madrasas across Afghanistan to promote their fundamental and extremist ideologies among the youth.

In the same token, Taliban have broken their promises of trying to break with terrorist groups, respect universal human rights, and take measures that prevent Afghanistan from posing a security threat to other countries. As the UN Security Council Monitoring Team reports confirmed, the Taliban continues to maintain links to Al-Qaida in addition to nearly 20 other terrorist entities, including Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), ETIM, IMU etc. are extremely alarming.

The Taliban's association with terror groups have created serious concerns and threats to the people of Afghanistan, neighboring countries and the international community. The people of Afghanistan have been the prime victim of terrorism in the past two decades. Terrorism is the antithesis of human rights, independence, and development.

The Taliban's failure to comply with their international obligations and commitments under the Doha agreement for bringing peace and stability in Afghanistan resulted in a political stalemate at the international level. The Taliban's hardline stance on human rights and women's rights has drawn widespread condemnation, further isolated Afghanistan globally.

It has been almost three years that the international community has collectively engaged with the Taliban in dialogue and discussion, hoping for a positive response on the shared demands of the people of Afghanistan and international community. However, they not only have not met those demands, but are in complete denial, trying to justify and cover their actions under the guise of a distorted and self-interpreted version of religion and culture.

Mr. Chair,

Despite these challenges, the people of Afghanistan remain resolute, with diverse groups working tirelessly to defend their rights and national values. Civil society, women, youth, and political movements have mobilized to form a united national agenda. The people of Afghanistan are tired of conflict and determined to overcome the crisis and achieve a permanent peace, stability and prosperity. We know that bringing peace to our country is a responsibility that primarily belongs to us - the people of Afghanistan. Over the past two years, Afghans from all walks of life and age groups - inside and outside Afghanistan - are tirelessly working and raising their voices in defending their rights, hard-earned achievements of past two decades and national values. This will not be realized without urgent and concerted efforts by the international community. We admire the UN Security Council for adopting the Independent Assessment report and its forward-looking recommendation for a coordinated, coherent and structured international approach for Afghanistan. We are grateful to the UN Secretary-General's efforts for convening two rounds of the Special Envoys and Representatives meetings in Doha last year and last May. We look forward to the Third Doha meeting with a tangible outcome at the end of this month.

Mr. Chair,

Against this backdrop, Afghanistan Missions to the United Nations along with most of Afghan diplomatic and consular missions abroad have continued to represent the State and the people of Afghanistan. We will continue to defend the rights and voice of the people of Afghanistan and constructively contribute to the international efforts to find a political settlement and to achieve a long-lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan.

Despite all challenges including lack of financial support from the capital or other sources, we are committed to uphold Afghanistan's international obligations under international law. We are hopeful that an inclusive, accountable broad-based and legitimate administration that is able to reflect the will and national aspirations of the people of Afghanistan is established through a national dialogue and puts an end to the suffering and misery of the people of Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has been an active and committed member of the United Nations since its membership in October 1946. We will continue to uphold the principles and objectives of the UN Charter. Afghanistan Mission to the UN has been unable to secure the necessary resources to fulfill our financial obligations to the United Nations. Attempts to leverage diplomatic channels, including our embassies abroad, have been thwarted by a lack of revenue and the absence of a legitimate government structure capable of facilitating payments.

Our embassies, while representing the Afghan people, are operating under severe financial constraints. The revenue generated by these diplomatic missions falls far short of the funds required to meet our obligations to the United Nations. This financial shortfall underscores the broader economic challenges facing Afghanistan in the absence of a functioning government.

Mr. Chair,

Given these profound political, economic and societal challenges, it is unfeasible for Afghanistan to meet its financial obligations to the United Nations at this time. The severe reduction in domestic revenue and the urgent need to address the humanitarian crisis necessitate our plea for an exemption under Article 19. However, we acknowledge our obligation to meet our financial responsibilities to the Organization and we will make all necessary payments as soon as possible. We respectfully request the Committee on Contributions to consider our extraordinary circumstances and grant us the relief needed to navigate through these tumultuous times. Your understanding and support are crucial for the survival and future stability of Afghanistan.

Thank you.

