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**STATEMENT**

**by**

**Mr. Manuel Korček**

**Deputy Permanent Representative of Slovakia  
to the United Nations**

**64<sup>th</sup> Session of the General Assembly**

**Item 17: The situation in Afghanistan**

**9 November 2009  
New York**

Mr. President,

First of all I would like to express my full support and associate myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Sweden on behalf of the European Union. Allow me to underline several important issues in my national capacity.

We welcome presented draft resolution on Afghanistan and we appreciate the efforts of Germany to facilitate a message of support of the international community to Afghan people and their hope for safe, stable, prosperous and democratic country. We are proud to be cosponsors of this resolution.

Slovakia advocates massive engagement of the international community in Afghanistan. The main aim of our common endeavor should be helping new Afghan government to become ready for taking full responsibility for the country as far as security, stability, rule of law and development is concerned.

International forces are playing a crucial role in helping to bring about a stable and secure Afghanistan. I would like to pay tribute to women and men of all nationalities, members of UN staff and many Afghans, who have lost their lives fighting for better, fear-free and prosperous future of Afghanistan. We condemn all subversive actions of Taliban and Al-Qaida aimed especially towards civilians and international civil personnel.

Slovakia is fully aware of its own responsibility for the situation in Afghanistan. That is why we have increased significantly our engagement in the military and also in civilian field. Despite economic crisis we fulfill our given commitments and we remain fully involved in the ISAF operation. Only five months ago Government of the Slovak Republic and National Council of the Slovak Republic extended mandate to 262 Slovak military personnel in the country and only recently we announced at the defense ministers meeting in Bratislava that our country considers to increase number of our troops as well as to do more in the reconstruction field.

Slovakia is also involved in training of Afghan National Army and in preparing our engagement of Afghan National Police by the means of providing our policemen to the EUPOL mission.

Security is the main precondition for further development of the country. However, we cannot wait until the country is secure to address the humanitarian situation. Durable peace and stability in Afghanistan can be achieved only when adopting adequate measures to promote socio-economic reconstruction of the

country. It is crucial to improve effectiveness of our joint efforts so the most of Afghans could enjoy the positive impacts on their lives as early as possible.

Since 2003 Afghanistan is one of the main priority countries of the Slovak development assistance. In 2009 Afghanistan was upgraded to a program country in line with the new 2009-2013 Medium-term Strategy for the development cooperation of Slovakia while our goal is to allocate there almost 1 million Euro in the upcoming period.

Slovakia aims its development assistance in Afghanistan according to its sectoral priorities in this country at developing democratic institutions, civil society and peace, social development and support of health care and education, developing economic and market environment and infrastructure.

In 2009 there were 6 bilateral development projects in total amount of 850 thousand Euro prepared by Slovak organizations.

Afghanistan is one of the four countries with lowest achievements in the fight against polio. In 2009 Government of Slovakia funded vaccines against polio distributed in cooperation with UNICEF for 250 thousand children in Afghanistan. In September we delivered humanitarian assistance in the form of tents and covers for people suffering in the province of Uruzgan affected by natural disasters.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan must remain on the top of our agenda, also in the long-term perspective. We are committed to our common objective: to help to improve the everyday lives of people there. Let me express my sincere hope that the international community led by United Nations will step up its multilateral efforts to provide assistance to the Afghan Government with a view of the consolidation of peace and stability in Afghanistan.

I thank you.