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STATEMENT

by

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

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Item 38: The situation in Afghanistan

**4 November 2010
New York**

Mr. President,

First of all, let me align myself with the statement delivered by the representative of Belgium on behalf of the European Union. We firmly stand behind the EU's common position on the situation in Afghanistan.

Slovakia is one of the cosponsors of the comprehensive resolution presented by Germany. The number of cosponsors underlines the scope of the support provided to Afghanistan. I thank Germany for its fruitful efforts to facilitate a consensus among international community on the renewed message of encouragement that covers all aspects of country's achievements and needs with main focus on the transition.

On this occasion, I would like to point out some aspects of the particular importance to my country.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan, 30 years war-thorn country, is an unchallenged priority for all of us. Slovakia is committed to assisting Afghanistan and contributes to its stability and security within the operation ISAF and by civilian and development activities.

Together with other countries, Slovakia will remain engaged until needed and requested, until Afghanistan is able - by its own means - to sustain security that will pave the way for development. As agreed at the Kabul Conference, we consider the phased transition of the security to the Afghan leadership as our primary task.

In the spring this year, Slovakia increased its troops in ISAF up to 300 and now we are again on upward trajectory. Yesterday, on November 3, 2010 the Slovak Government agreed on a new mandate of the troops. Our new military contribution will be primarily focused on the support to the transition process including training and stand-up of the Afghan National Security Forces. We will deploy explosive ordnance disposal team for the purpose of protection of civil population and ISAF forces from mines and improvised explosive devices that cause huge human casualties. At the same time, we are withdrawing our national caveats for most of our troops.

Mr. President,

Apart from our military engagement, we expand all components of our comprehensive approach to Afghanistan. It is among three priority program

countries of the Slovak Official Development Assistance (SlovakAid) and we plan to review by the end of 2010 how our assistance can be better distributed. Currently, we are setting mechanism allowing deployment of civilian personnel in Afghanistan.

I wish to mention the following projects that the Slovak Government as well as NGO's, universities and private sector have accomplished recently or have been actively working on:

- reintegrating of displaced persons and returnees in the Quara-bagh
- establishing of gastroenterological centre in Kabul
- education of mothers on how to take care of healthy or sick child through publicly available didactic panels
- building capacities at the Kabul's polytechnic university
- supporting the socio-economic development of rural communities in the Parwan province through active involvement of women
- expanding the urgent-care capacities of the hospital in Lodin
- building a cultural, educational and social centre in the Kunduz province
- educating inhabitants of rural communities on more effective ways of profiting from agriculture.

We believe that through targeted projects that are well coordinated and aligned with the priorities of the Afghan Government we can improve the daily life of Afghan people. We can bring hope and convey assurances that support is given not only at the highest but all levels. We need understanding and trust of the Afghans to fulfill our common goal of secure, stable and prosperous country.

Mr. President,

In conclusion, let me express my hope that international community united behind UNAMA remains committed to assisting the Afghan Government in the quest for lasting peace and security and also in achieving the full ownership of the reconstruction and development of Afghanistan. I thank you.