



**SHARANYA NARAYANI INTERNATIONAL  
SCHOOL MODEL UNITED NATIONS, 2021**

**UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS  
COUNCIL**

**BACKGROUND GUIDE**

**Agenda: Addressing the humanitarian crisis that has unfolding since the Taliban takeover of Afghanistan with special emphasis on women and minorities.**

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## **LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE BOARD**

Greetings delegates,

We take immense pleasure in welcoming you to the United Nations Human Rights Council, being simulated at SNIS Model United Nations, 2021. We look forward to an exciting and intellectually stimulating conference.

We're glad that we have had the opportunity to serve as the members of your Executive Board and we assure you that this conference would be a great learning experience for all of you. Furthermore, we not only will share the knowledge that's been passed on to us by our mentors, but also impart all the knowledge that we have garnered in the last few years of our MUNing and on our own journey as delegates and EB members. For some of you, this will be your very first conference. We understand that you may have certain apprehensions and inhibitions regarding the various technical aspects of MUNs and we, as your Executive Board, will continually motivate and guide you through the minutiae of an MUN conference. In order to help you research well, we have prepared this background guide which will introduce you to the committee proceedings, its history, mandate and will further give you an overview of the agenda at hand. We hope this helps kick start your portfolio related as well as agenda related research.

This study guide, although very comprehensive and factual, provides a basic idea of the agenda and arguments in view of the United Nations and may vary from those of the respective country policies. In no way does this guide intend to confine research and thus, the delegates must make it a point not to confine their research to this guide. The guide consists of subjective and factual data with legal arguments, but this is just to make the delegates understand the ways in which they must make their addresses. At the cost of repetition, we strongly emphasise on reading this letter, the suggestions and the guiding questions given in this guide, thoroughly. This Background Guide is only intended to serve as a document introducing you to several important topics you need to know about before debating in the committee. We do not, by any means, intend for you to be limited by the topics mentioned in

this document. We encourage you to conduct extensive research individually and then lobby effectively to make the committee benefit from your unique and valuable viewpoint.

We would be following the UNA USA Rules of Procedures and hence, your analytical skills, your negotiation skills and your ability of consensus building would be of paramount importance. We would adhere to UNAUSA, figuring prominently in the proceedings with some irregularities as will be necessary as per working methods of a UNSC as well as for facilitating debate, as this will be conducted on an online platform.

As you prepare to become honorable diplomats representing your respective nations, it is imperative for each of you to understand the volume of such a position of power. We expect all of you to display immaculate diplomacy and courtesy during as well as outside the committee. We strongly urge you to be diplomatic, not demanding. We also request you to strictly adhere to your foreign policy.

Feel free to revert back to the executive board for any queries or for any form of assistance you shall need. Wishing you good luck for the conference!

Also take note that no questions to consider section is present in this background guide because the executive board does not want you all to limit the horizons of your research.

Regards,

The Executive Board

United Nations Human Rights Council

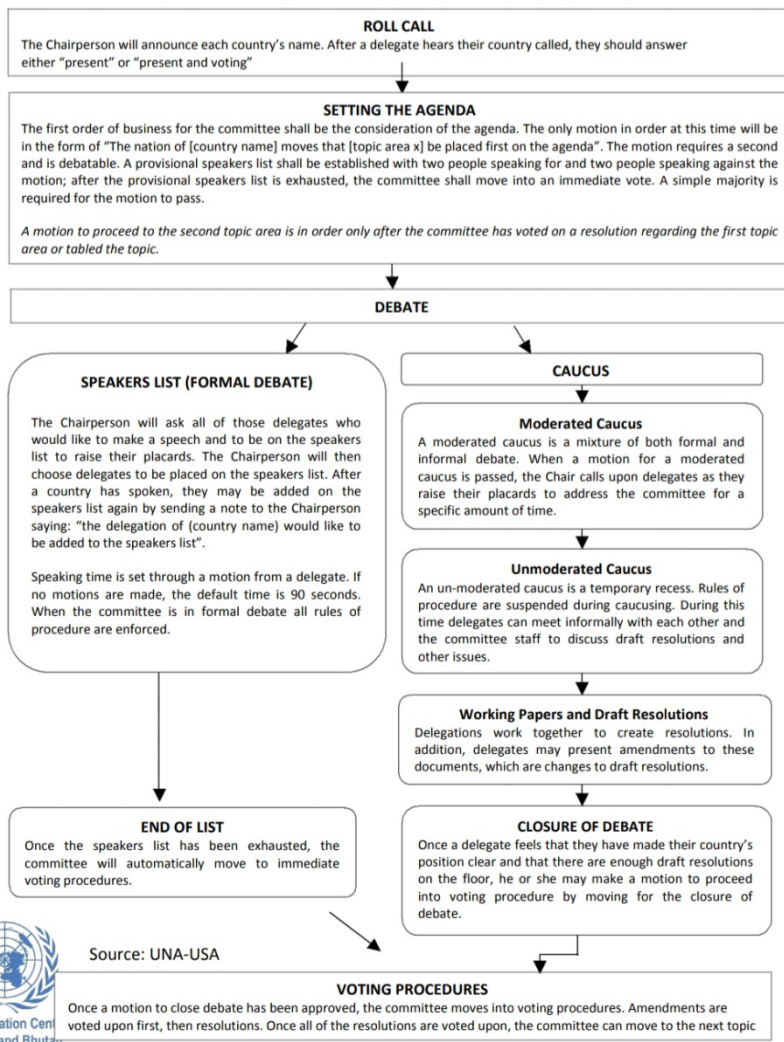
SNIS Model United Nations, 2021.

Sarbangna Mishra (President)

Rishita Aggarwal (Vice President)

# BRIEF EXPLANATION OF THE UNA/USA RULES OF PROCEDURE

## Flow of Debate: Traditional MUN Model



## **EVIDENCE OR PROOF ACCEPTED**

Following sources will be accepted as credible in the committee:

### 1) News Sources

a. REUTERS – Any Reuters’ article which clearly makes mention of the fact stated or is in contradiction of the fact being stated by another delegate in council can be used to substantiate arguments in the committee. (<http://www.reuters.com/> )

b. State operated News Agencies – These reports can be used in the support of or against the State that owns the News Agency. These reports, if credible or substantial enough, can be used in support of or against any country as such but in that situation, they can be denied by any other

country in the council. Some examples are, RIA Novosti (Russia) <http://en.rian.ru/> IRNA (Iran) <http://www.irna.ir/ENIndex.htm>

c. ALJAZEERA (maybe accepted)

d. BBC (maybe accepted)

### 2) Government Reports

These reports can be used in a similar way as the State Operated News Agencies reports and can, in all circumstances, be denied by another country. However, a nuance is that the Executive Board as credible information can still accept a report that is being denied by a certain country. Some examples are Government Websites like the State Department of the United States of America <http://www.state.gov/index.htm> or the Ministry of Defence of the Russian Federation <http://www.eng.mil.ru/en/index.htm> Ministry of Foreign Affairs of various nations like India (<http://www.mea.gov.in/>) or People’s Republic of China

(<http://www.fmprc.gov.cn/eng/>). Permanent Representatives to the United Nations Reports <http://www.un.org/en/members/>

(Click on any country to get the website of the Office of its Permanent Representative.)

Multilateral Organizations like the NATO (<http://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/index.htm>), ASEAN (<http://www.aseansec.org/>), OPEC ([http://www.opec.org/opec\\_web/en/](http://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/)), etc.

### 3) UN Reports

All UN Reports are considered credible information or evidence for the Executive Board of this joint session. UN Bodies like the UNSC (<http://www.un.org/Docs/sc/>) or UNGA (<http://www.un.org/en/ga/>). UN Affiliated bodies like the International Atomic Energy Agency (<http://www.iaea.org/>), World Bank (<http://www.worldbank.org/>), International Monetary Fund (<http://www.imf.org/external/index.htm>), International Committee of the Red Cross (<http://www.icrc.org/eng/index.jsp>), etc.



## **BEST PRACTICES FOR RESEARCH BEFORE AN MUN**

(You can take these best practices into account, not only for this MUN but for other MUNs as well.)

1. Read the Agenda Guide, least 20 days prior to the conference and make a note of everything that needs to be understood. Do read the Background guide.
2. In case of a crisis situation, always read and look for the analysis and plausible rationale on the updates that may be issued a week before the MUN.
3. Google/Search everything and find relating documents (UN, News articles, Scholarly articles) for whatever was not really understood.
4. After wholly understanding (subject to how in depth you wish to go for the research), try understanding your allotted country's perspective on the agenda!
5. Make the stance in accordance with the country's perspective on the agenda which shall also define your foreign policy (history, past actions etc.)
6. Understand the cues and hints that are given minutely in the Background Guide that may come handy while presentation of contentions in committee.
7. Take a good look at the mandate of the council as to what you can discuss and what you can do in this council. This point is placed here, just because your knowledge base shouldn't be limited to the mandate of the council. Know everything, speak whatever the mandate allows.
8. Follow the links given alongside and understand why they were given. Read the footnotes and the links and hyperlinked text.
  - Predict the kind of discussions and on what subtopics can take place, thereby analysing the subtopic research you have done and prepare yourself accordingly.
  - Make a word/page's document and put your arguments there for better presentation in council.

- Ask the Executive Board your doubts, if you have any, at least 10 days before the conference by means of the given email ID and make sure to not disclose your allotted country, until you want to understand the policy of your country.
- Download the United Nations Charter, the Geneva Conventions of 1949 and additional protocols, 1951, 63 Refugee Conventions there to and other relative treaties and documents given.
- Ask questions regarding procedure to speak something etc., if you have any, ON the day of the conference.

## **INTRODUCTION TO THE HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

The United Nations Human Rights Council (UNHRC) is an inter-governmental body within the United Nations System. The UNHRC is the successor to the United Nations Commission on Human Rights (UNCHR/CHR), and is a subsidiary body of the United Nations General Assembly. The council works closely with the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) and engages the United Nations' Special Procedures. The General Assembly established the UNHRC by adopting a resolution (A/RES/60/251) on 15 March 2006, in order to replace the previous UN Commission on Human Rights, which had been heavily criticized for allowing countries with poor human rights records to be members. In June 2007, the Council also adopted Resolution 5/2, containing a Code of Conduct for special procedures mandate holders (explained later).

### **Responsibilities**

The UN Human Rights Council is an intergovernmental organization which works under the UN system. It is responsible for strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights around the globe and for addressing situations of human rights violations and make recommendations on them. It has the ability to discuss all thematic human rights issues and situations that require its attention throughout the year.

### **Creation**

It is the successor of the United Nations Commission of Human Rights. It was created by the United Nations General Assembly on 15 March 2006 by resolution 60/251. It has 47 members which are elected by the majority of UNGA through a secret ballot. Election takes place in every 3 years and members are not eligible for immediate re-election after two consecutive terms. The membership is based on equitable geographical distribution. The seats are distributed among the regional groups as follows:

- Group of African State: 13
- Group of Asian State: 13
- Group of Eastern Europe: 6
- Group of Latin America and Caribbean States: 8
- Group of Western European and Other States: 7

## **Principles**

Human Rights Council promotes that the human rights should not be discriminated on the basis of race, colour, sex, language or religion, politics or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. It believes that human rights are universal, indivisible, interrelated, inter-dependent and must be treated in a fair and equal manner.

## **Methodology**

The Human Rights Council enables dialogues between countries to strengthen the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations for the benefit of all human beings. It allows subsequent follow-up discussions to recommendations and their implementation. It strives to be transparent, fair, impartial and result-oriented.

## **Review Mechanism**

The Human Rights Council's work and functioning are reviewed by the United Nations General Assembly every five years after it has come into existence.

## **Complaint Procedure**

On 18 June 2007, the Human Rights Council adopted resolution 5/1 entitled "Institution-Building of the United Nations Human Rights Council" by which a new complaint procedure was established to address consistent patterns of gross and reliably attested violations of all human rights and all fundamental freedoms occurring in any part of the world and under any circumstances.

The complaint procedure addresses communications submitted by individuals, groups, or non-governmental organizations that claim to be victims of human rights violations or that have direct, reliable knowledge of such violations.

## **Special Procedures**

The special procedures of the Human Rights Council are independent human rights experts with mandates to report and advise on human rights from a thematic or country-specific perspective. The system of Special Procedures is a central element of the United Nations human rights machinery and covers all human rights: civil, cultural, economic, political, and social. As of 27 March 2015, there are 41 thematic and 14 country mandates.

With the support of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), special procedures undertake country visits; act on individual cases and concerns of a broader, structural nature by sending communications to States and others in which they bring alleged violations or abuses to their attention; conduct thematic studies and convene expert consultations, contribute to the development of international human rights standards, engage in advocacy, raise public awareness, and provide advice for technical cooperation. Special procedures report annually to the Human Rights Council; the majority of the mandates also report to the General Assembly. Their tasks are defined in the resolutions creating or extending their mandate.

## **MANDATE OF UN HUMAN RIGHTS**

The Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (UN Human Rights) is mandated by the UN General Assembly to promote and protect the enjoyment and full realization, by all people, of all human rights. The Charter of the United Nations, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and international human rights laws and treaties established those rights.

UN Human Rights was created by the General Assembly in 1993 through its resolution 48/141 which also details its mandate.

### **UN Human Rights is mandated:**

- Promote and protect all human rights for all
- Recommend that bodies of the UN system improve the promotion and protection of all human rights
- Promote and protect the right to development
- Provide technical assistance to States for human rights activities
- Coordinate UN human rights education and public information programmes
- Work actively to remove obstacles to the realization of human rights and to prevent the continuation of human rights violations
- Engage in dialogue with Governments in order to secure respect for all human rights
- Enhance international cooperation for the promotion and protection of all human rights
- Coordinate human rights promotion and protection activities throughout the United Nations system
- Rationalize, adapt, strengthen and streamline the UN human rights machinery.

**The Human Rights Council (HRC or Council)** is the only intergovernmental organisation **responding to all human rights abuses across the globe** by exposing violators and demanding change.

By sounding alarm bells at an early stage, the **HRC can prevent oncoming human rights disasters or protracted crises from spreading**. Prompt action by the Council has helped stem conflicts in countries given international condemnation voiced at the HRC and critical reporting from the Council-mandated investigation missions. The HRC's swift actions

to spotlight human rights violations has also stirred global attention and prompted the governments to take actions to remedy those situations.

**No one State runs the Council.** The HRC is a group of 47 nations presided over by a President, a position currently held by the Ambassador of Austria (Elisabeth Tichy-Fisslberger). With 117 of the 193 UN member States having served on the HRC, the Council's membership reflects the UN's diversity giving it legitimacy when speaking out on human rights violations in all countries.

**Council members commit themselves to uphold human rights.** No country has a clean human rights sheet, and the quality of the Council's membership influences its impacts.

The **HRC can address any human rights issue brought to its attention**, often those that other bodies will not or are unable to discuss. Governments, grass roots activists and other HRC participants address countless issues throughout the busy Council sessions year-long; approx. 30 weeks of meetings annually.

The HRC has adopted more than **1,779 resolutions** since it began meeting in 2006, addressing no fewer than **120 themes** and placing governments under intense scrutiny. The themes addressed by the Council include rule of law, democracy, terrorism, human trafficking, torture, freedoms of opinion, expression, assembly and association, women's rights and gender equality, migration, persons with disabilities, and LGBT rights. Nearly half of these resolutions, **856, have focussed on country situations**; nearly 80% of all resolutions have been adopted by consensus.

The Council has held **28 emergency sessions** addressing human rights violations in several countries. In the wake of the "Arab Spring" in late 2010, such meetings were held in Libya and Syria to sharply criticize atrocities committed, as well as the Central African Republic, Iraq (addressing ISIL), Gaza, Boko Haram, Burundi, South Sudan and Myanmar.

The Council has also authorised **31 commissions of inquiry and fact-finding missions producing hard-hitting evidence on war crimes and crimes against humanity** feeding into formal justice processes to hold violators accountable. Since 2011, such investigations have been carried out on Libya, Côte d'Ivoire, Syria, North-Korea, the Central African Republic, Sri Lanka, Eritrea, the occupied Palestinian territories, Iraq, South Sudan, the DRC, Burundi, Myanmar, Yemen and Venezuela.

The Council's **Universal Periodic Review has been shining a light on human rights abuses worldwide** since it began in 2008, and has commenced the third round of fully reviewing the human rights records of all 193 UN member States in 2017. The UPR sparks

real change on the ground with new human rights laws and practices, better protection for victims, strengthened rule of law and justice systems, and accountability for abuses.

The HRC's **independent human rights experts** (“Special Procedures”) serve as the **eyes and ears of the Council** monitoring human rights in countries pushing for improved conditions. These experts –now numbering 80 mandate holders for 56 mandates –speak out on themes such as education, health, free speech and human trafficking, as well as on country situations including North Korea, Eritrea, Iran and Myanmar, among others. **In 2019, they carried out 84 visits to 57 countries and territories**, and have had major impacts in reducing human rights violations

*P.S: Here is a short document from the official Human Rights Council website to help you conceptualise at a glance:*

<https://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/Pages/AboutCouncil.aspx>



## **BRIEF BACKGROUND OF THE AGENDA**

On 3 January 1980, a number of Member States requested an urgent meeting of the Security Council to consider the situation in Afghanistan and its implications for international peace and security. The Council met from 5 to 9 January 1980, and on 9 January decided, in view of the lack of unanimity of its permanent members, to call for an emergency special session of the General Assembly to examine the matter (resolution 462 (1980)).

The item was included in the agenda of the thirty-fifth session of the General Assembly, in 1980, at the request of 35 Member States (A/35/144 and Add.1). At that session, the Assembly adopted a resolution on the question (resolution 35/37).

At its thirty-sixth to forty-sixth sessions, the General Assembly continued its consideration of the item (resolutions 36/34, 37/37, 38/29, 39/13, 40/12, 41/33, 42/15, 43/20, 44/15, 45/12 and 46/23).

At its forty-seventh to forty-ninth sessions, the General Assembly decided to defer consideration of the item and to include it in the draft agenda of its subsequent session (decisions 47/475 [page 54], 48/503 and 49/501 [page 40]).

At its fiftieth to sixtieth sessions, the General Assembly considered this item in conjunction with the question of emergency international assistance for peace, normalcy and reconstruction of war-stricken Afghanistan (resolutions 50/88, 51/195, 52/211, 53/203, 54/189, 55/174, 56/220, 57/113, 58/27, 59/112 and 60/32).

At its sixty-first session, the General Assembly, expressing strong commitment to the implementation of the Afghanistan Compact and the annexes thereto (S/2006/90, annex), which provided the framework for the partnership between the Government of Afghanistan and the international community, recognizing the urgent need to tackle the challenges in Afghanistan, including terrorist threats, the fight against narcotics, the lack of security, in particular in the south and east, the comprehensive nationwide disbandment of illegal armed groups and the development of Afghan Government institutions, the strengthening of the rule

of law, the acceleration of justice sector reform, the promotion of national reconciliation, without prejudice to the fulfilment of the measures introduced by the Security Council in its resolution 1267 (1999) and other relevant resolutions, and an Afghan-led transitional justice process, the safe and orderly return of Afghan refugees and internally displaced persons, the promotion and protection of human rights and the advancement of economic and social development, and expressing strong support for the central and impartial role that the Secretary-General and his Special Representative continued to play in the consolidation of peace and stability in Afghanistan, called upon the Government of Afghanistan, with the assistance of the international community, to continue to press the threat to the security and stability of Afghanistan posed by the Taliban, Al-Qaida and other extremist groups as well as by criminal violence; stressed the importance of meeting the benchmarks of the Afghanistan Compact, with the support of the international community; underlined the need to finalize the Afghanistan National Development Strategy as soon as possible, and urged the international community actively to support that process; and requested the Secretary-General to report to the Assembly every six months during its sixty-first session on developments in Afghanistan and on the progress made in the implementation of the resolution (resolution 61/18).

## **A BRIEF TIMELINE OF EVENTS**

(As mentioned in Al-Jazeera)

### **September 11, 2001: US attacked**

Nineteen members of al-Qaeda, a group granted sanctuary by Taliban-controlled Afghanistan, hijack four commercial airliners in the US.

Two of the planes are flown into the World Trade Center in New York City, collapsing both towers.

One plane is flown into the Pentagon, the seat of the US Department of Defense, in Virginia.

The fourth plane crashes into a field in Pennsylvania, after passengers on board hearing of the other attacks, storm the cockpit.

A total of 2,977 people were killed in the attacks.

### **September 18, 2001: AUMF approved**

Then-President George W Bush signed the 2001 Authorisation of Use of Military Force (AUMF).

The resolution, which was passed by Congress with only one legislator objecting, legally permits the US president, without further congressional approval, to use military action against a wide array of people or groups that “planned, authorised, committed, or aided the terrorist attacks that occurred on September 11, 2001 or harbored such organizations or persons”.

### **October 7, 2001: ‘Enduring Freedom’ launched**

Less than a month after the September 11 attacks, US President George W Bush launches “Operation Enduring Freedom” in Afghanistan, after the Taliban refuses to hand over al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden.

In a matter of weeks, the US-led forces overthrew the Taliban, which had been in power since 1996.

Apart from air raids, the US also gave backing to the Afghan Northern Alliance, which had been fighting the Taliban, contributing paramilitary teams from the CIA and special forces.

Some 1,000 American soldiers were deployed on the ground in November, rising to 10,000 the year after.

### **April 17, 2002: Transitional Afghan govt**

A transitional government led by Hamid Karzai is established in Kabul.

US Congress approves \$38bn in spending as part of Bush's plan to rebuild Afghanistan.

### **October 10, 2002: Iraq AUMF approved**

Congress passes the 2002 Iraq AUMF after the Bush administration warns that Baghdad is developing "weapons of mass destruction".

Bush signed the resolution into law on October 16.

The resolution sets the US on track for the invasion of Iraq, although no evidence would be found to substantiate the Bush administration's claims.

### **2003-2008: Taliban regroup, Bush sends more troops**

Attention is diverted from Afghanistan as US forces in 2003 mount an invasion of Iraq.

As attention turns to Iraq, the Taliban and other armed groups regroup in their strongholds in the south and east of Afghanistan, from where they can easily travel to and from Pakistani tribal areas.

In 2008, the US command on the ground called for more manpower to carry out an effective strategy against the Taliban.

Bush agreed to send additional soldiers and by mid-2008 there were 48,500 US troops in the country.

### **2009: Number of soldiers peaks under Obama**

In 2009, in the first months of the presidency of Barack Obama – elected on campaign promises to end the two wars in Iraq and Afghanistan – there was a surge in the number of American soldiers in Afghanistan to about 68,000.

In December, Obama raised the strength of US forces in Afghanistan to approximately 100,000.

The objective, the US says, is to halt the Taliban militarily and to strengthen Afghan institutions.

In announcing the increase, Obama also set a deadline, saying US forces would begin to reduce US force numbers in 2011.

### **May 2, 2011: Bin Laden killed in Pakistan**

Al-Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden, who the US has identified as the mastermind behind the 9/11 attack, is killed on May 2, 2011, during an operation by US special forces in Pakistan, where he is in hiding.

### **June 2011: Obama announces troop withdrawal**

Obama announces the US will begin withdrawing troops from Afghanistan, as the first attempts to negotiate between the US, Taliban and the Afghan government begin.

By December, the US completely withdrew troops from Iraq.

### **2014: End of Afghanistan combat operations**

In September 2014, Afghanistan signed a bilateral security accord with the US and a similar agreement with NATO: 12,500 foreign soldiers, of which 9,800 are Americans, will remain in the country in 2015, after the end of the NATO combat mission at the end of 2014.

From the beginning of 2015, American troops will be charged with two missions: “anti-terrorist” operations against al-Qaeda and training Afghan forces.

In late December, the NATO combat mission ends, and is replaced by an assistance mission dubbed, “Resolute Support”.

However, the security situation deteriorates.

### **2015: US bombs MSF clinic**

On October 3, 2015, at the height of combat between armed groups and the Afghan army, backed by NATO special forces, a US air raid bombs a hospital run by Doctors Without Borders ( Médecins Sans Frontières, MSF) in northern Kunduz province, killing 42, including 24 patients and 14 members of the NGO.

### **July 6, 2016: Obama slows withdrawal**

Obama again slows down the pace of US troop withdrawal, saying that 8,400 US troops will remain in Afghanistan into 2017.

### **2017: Trump increases troops**

On February 1, 2017, a US government report said that losses of Afghan security forces have climbed by 35 percent in 2016 compared with the previous year.

On February 9, the US general in command of the NATO forces, General John Nicholson, warned that he needed thousands more troops, telling Congress: “I believe we’re in a stalemate.”

On August 21, newly elected President Donald Trump cleared the way for the deployment of thousands more US troops to Afghanistan in his first formal address.

Trump later deploys about 3,000 more troops to Afghanistan, bringing the total US troops in the country to about 14,000.

### **January 28, 2019: US, Taliban agree on ‘framework’**

US officials announce negotiators in Doha, Qatar and a Taliban delegation have agreed in principle to a “framework” for an eventual US withdrawal.

Under the framework, which was established in talks that did not include the Afghan government, the Taliban would guarantee the territory they controlled would not become “a

platform for international terrorist groups or individuals” in exchange for peace talks with the Taliban and Afghan government.

### **February 29, 2020: US, Taliban reach withdrawal agreement**

The Taliban and the Trump administration reach an agreement for US troops to withdraw by May 1, 2021, in exchange for stopping attacks against US forces and cutting ties with al-Qaeda.

### **January 15, 2021: Trump draws down troops**

In its final days in office, the Trump administration announces that US forces in Afghanistan have been reduced to 2,500.

### **April 14, 2021: Biden continues withdrawal**

President Joe Biden says he will continue with Trump’s withdrawal agreement, but pushes back the deadline.

He says all US troops will be out of Afghanistan by September 11, 2021 – the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks.

### **July 8, 2021: Biden moves up deadline**

Two days after US forces leave the Bagram Airfield, its largest military installation in Afghanistan, Biden announces that US troops will completely withdraw from Afghanistan by August 31.

He says recent advances by the Taliban will not change the withdrawal timeframe.

### **August 6, 2021: Taliban offensive**

The Taliban’s lightning-fast advance, launched in May, sees the group on August 6 take its first provincial capital, Zaranj, since the offensive began.

At least 17 more provinces fall to the Taliban in the coming days, as the group poises itself to take Kabul.

### **August 15, 2021: Taliban entered Kabul**

The Taliban enter Kabul with no resistance as President Ashraf Ghani flees the country.

The speed of the fall of the Afghan government upends even the least optimistic assessments from Western intelligence agencies, and sends countries scrambling to evacuate citizens and vulnerable Afghans through the Kabul airport, which comes under US military control.

### **August 26, 2021: ISKP attacks airport**

As chaotic evacuation efforts continue, The Islamic State in Khorasan Province, or ISKP (ISIS-K), attacks the Kabul airport in a bombing that kills nearly 200 Afghans and 13 members of the US military.

The attack proved one of the deadliest for US forces since they first entered Afghanistan.

A resulting US drone raid kills several civilians, including children, in Kabul.

### **August 30, 2021: All US Troops leave Afghanistan**

The Pentagon announces that all US troops have left Afghanistan – With the last plane lifting off just before midnight, ahead of the August 31 deadline.

At least 100 US citizens remain in Afghanistan, as well as an untold number of Afghans who worked for the US government.

The Taliban seized Kabul airport, which has not been operational since, as the US moves its Afghanistan diplomatic team to Doha, Qatar.



# REPORT ON HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS IN AFGHANISTAN

The Taliban in Afghanistan's western city of Herat are committing widespread and serious human rights violations against women and girls, Human Rights Watch and the San Jose State University (SJSU) Human Rights Institute said today. Since taking over the city on August 12, 2021, the Taliban have instilled fear among women and girls by searching out high-profile women; denying women freedom of movement outside their homes; imposing compulsory dress codes; severely curtailing access to employment and education; and restricting the right to peaceful assembly.

Women in Herat told the two organizations that their lives had been completely upended the day the Taliban took control of the city. The women had been employed outside their homes or were students and played active and often leadership roles in their community. They said that immediately after the Taliban's arrival, they found themselves trapped indoors, afraid to leave their house without a male family member or because of dress restrictions, with their access to education and employment fundamentally changed or ended entirely. They said they faced economic anxieties due to lost income and their inability to work. They also faced distress and other mental health consequences as they contemplated an abrupt end to the dreams they had worked toward for many years.

“For the women in Herat we interviewed, life as they knew it had vanished overnight, and they were left hiding indoors, waiting in fear to see whether the Taliban would come for them,” said Halima Kazem-Stojanovic, a core faculty member of SJSU's Human Rights Institute and a scholar on Afghanistan. “For these women, the best-case scenario is to be unharmed but forced to live a drastically diminished existence. The worst-case scenario is to be arrested or attacked for their past achievements or for their fight to keep their hard-earned rights.”

Human Rights Watch and the SJSU Human Rights Institute conducted in-depth interviews by telephone in Dari with seven women in Herat, including activists, educators, and university students, about their experiences since the Taliban took over the city. The women all spoke on the condition of anonymity, out of fear for their safety.

Women in Herat were among the first to organize protests in defense of women's rights after the Taliban gained control of Kabul and most of the country. Organizers and protesters said they were not engaging in anti-Taliban protests or supporting the former government but were calling for the Taliban to respect their rights: to live without fear of reprisal against them and their family members; to be able to continue going to their jobs without requiring a mahram (male family member as a chaperone); and to have girls above grade six return to school.

Within days of the Taliban takeover of Herat, a group of women asked to meet with local Taliban leaders to discuss their rights, and several days later they were able to meet with a Taliban representative. However, the official was inflexible: he told the women to stop insisting on their rights and that if they supported the Taliban, they would be rewarded with full amnesty for their past activities and maybe even get positions in the new government.

Some of the women felt they had no choice but to protest and organized two demonstrations. About 60 to 80 women attended the first one, on September 2, and the Taliban did not intervene. But the Taliban's response to the second protest, on September 7, was violent and abusive. Taliban fighters lashed protesters and fired weapons indiscriminately to disperse the crowd, killing two men and wounding at least eight more. The Taliban subsequently banned protests that did not have prior approval from the Justice Ministry in Kabul, ordering organizers to include information about the purpose of any protests and slogans to be used in any requests to the ministry.

“Afghan women have the right to express their views on any matter, especially when their most basic rights – to study, work, and even leave their own homes – are in jeopardy,” said Heather Barr, associate women’s rights director at Human Rights Watch. “The Taliban compound the abuses they are committing against women when they also deny them their right to speak out.”

The women interviewed expressed particular concern that the Taliban would again enforce the policy of requiring them to have a mahram with them whenever they left their home, as the Taliban did when they were previously in power, from 1996 to 2001. This requirement barred women from most public life, cut them off from education, employment, and social life, and made getting health care difficult. It also and made them completely dependent on male family members, blocking them from escaping if they experienced abuse at home.

Zabiullah Mujahid, a Taliban spokesperson, said in an interview in Kabul on September 7 that being accompanied by a mahram would only be required for travels longer than three days, not for daily activities such as attending work, school, shopping, medical appointments, and other needs. But Taliban officials in Herat have not been consistent in carrying out the policy. Some of the women interviewed said that Taliban fighters had stopped them on the streets, at universities, and other public places, and barred them from going about their business if they were not accompanied by a mahram.

“The experience of women in Herat raises grave concerns about the extent to which the Taliban leadership in Kabul is able or willing to control the actions of their members across the country on human rights, including women’s rights,” Kazem-Stojanovic said. “The Taliban leadership should ensure that their statements upholding rights are respected in practice in all Afghan provinces. Claims by Taliban leaders to respect women’s rights will be

meaningless if women and girls have to live in constant fear of abuse by the Taliban on their street.”

Amid withdrawal of foreign forces, human rights violations in Afghanistan at peak  
ANI | Updated: Jul 30, 2021 04:23 IST

Kabul [Afghanistan], July 30 (ANI): Human rights violations have been increasing in Afghanistan at a time when the withdrawal of North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) forces from the war-torn country is about to be completed.

Over the past few weeks, Afghanistan has witnessed a surge in violence as the Taliban has intensified its offensive with the complete pullback of foreign forces just a few weeks away. Last week, a popular comedian in Afghanistan was killed by unidentified gunmen allegedly Taliban in Kandahar province of the country.

Nazar Mohammad, better known as Khasha Zwan, was taken out of his home on July 22 and killed, as per Tolo News. The family of the comedian, who previously served in Kandahar Police, has blamed the Taliban for the attack.

Apart from it, there is fury on social media against the Taliban group. Netizens are expressing outrage over the "barbarous" action of the Taliban.

In various videos circulating on social media, in which Taliban terrorists are seen abducting girls forcefully from her home and killing civilians mercilessly.

Apart from videos, a number of sensitive photos are also circulated on many social media platforms.

One of the netizens shared a video saying: "These visuals from Kandahar Spin Boldak. How cruel they are! These Talibans ousting the people from their houses and Killing them mercilessly also alleging that they are the supporters of Afghanistan Government."

While another said: "Pls send all the rapists and murderers, groomers back to where they belong. Pls also send all the illegal immigrants trying to claim asylum as per their convenience, but pls do something to protect the young children from the atrocities of Taliban in Afghanistan."

In another video, several people are seen beating a man mercilessly.

"By what human criteria can this action be justified? These religions, which consider themselves the omnipotent representatives of God on earth, which religion allowed this kind

of savage acts? Even the approach of these animals does not match the predators ...," said a netizen.

Taliban has intensified its offensive against civilians and Afghan security forces with the complete pullback of foreign forces just a few weeks away.

President Joe Biden had said that the full drawdown of forces would be complete by the end of August and defended pulling troops from Afghanistan. He even made it clear that rebuilding the war-torn country was not the responsibility of the US.

The United Nations has expressed concern with the number of reported "serious human rights abuses" and violations alleged in communities most affected by the ongoing military offensive across the country.

The United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) said the reports of killing, ill-treatment, persecution and discrimination are widespread and disturbing, creating fear and insecurity. "Those who carry out any such acts must be held accountable."

The UN has reiterated that parties are obliged to respect the human rights and dignity of all Afghans, especially those of women and girls who have in the past been subjected to particularly acute forms of discrimination.

The Taliban now control about half of the 419 district centres in Afghanistan, and while they have yet to capture any of the country's 34 provincial capitals, said General Mark Milley, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff.

As the Taliban seize more territory, the Afghan security forces are consolidating their positions to protect key population centres, including Kabul, he said.

## **KEY INTERNATIONAL ACTORS**

The Security Council takes a multi-faceted approach to combating terrorism by adopting resolutions, overseeing programs and ad hoc committees, and mandating peacekeeping operations. Following the 11 September 2001 New York City terrorist attacks, the Security Council created the Counter-Terrorism Committee (CTC) and its Executive Directorate (CTED) through Security Council resolution 1373 (2001), with the mandate to strengthen Member States' capacity to combat terrorism through capacity-building mechanisms. The CTC also hosts fora, such as the 2018 High-level Conference of Heads of Counter-Terrorism Agencies of Member States, to provide states with the opportunity to share best practices on counter-terrorism measures. In 2004 through Security Council resolution 1535 (2004), the CTC's mandate was further extended and updated. More recently, the annex to the document, "Letter dated 26 April 2017 from the Chair of the Security Council Committee established by resolution 1373 (2001) concerning counter-terrorism addressed to the President of the Security Council" (S/2017/375) created the first Comprehensive international framework to counter terrorist narratives. Since Security Council resolution 1624 (2005), the CTC has worked to implement this framework and has identified the increasing terrorist threat of incitement and radicalization. The framework outlines the importance of legal and law enforcement measures, public-private partnerships, and counter-narratives in combating terrorism. This framework is strengthened by Security Council resolution 2354 (2017).

The General Assembly First Committee, with a mandate to promote and maintain international peace and security, is also a crucial actor in combating terrorism. Founded in 2005 and endorsed by the General Assembly in 2006, the Counter-Terrorism Implementation Task Force (CTITF) is made up of 38 international organizations who act to strengthen counter-terrorism efforts within the UN system. Created in 2017 by the UN General Assembly through resolution 71/291, the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism (UNOCT) oversees CTITF and the CTC. Headed by an Under-Secretary-General, the UNOCT is tasked with providing leadership for the UN's counter-terrorism efforts.<sup>226</sup> UNOCT is also responsible for ensuring the implementation of the 2006 UN Global Counter-Terrorism Strategy, facilitating capacity-building for Member States, advocating and mobilizing resources for UN counter-terrorism efforts, and ensuring the continued presence of counter-terrorism matters in the UN's work. The UN Office for Disarmament Affairs (UNODA) is a member of CTITF and provides a database for biological and chemical

weapons that could be used by terrorist organizations, which is supplemented by the International Criminal Police Organization (INTERPOL)'s biocrimes database.

## **UNITED STATES OF AMERICA**

Ever since supporting the mujahideen militias with money and weapons during the Soviet occupation, the US has been deeply involved in Afghanistan. Soon after 9/11 it started its bombing campaign, which continues until today, primarily with the use of drones. In January 2019, US forces carried out 369 strikes in Afghanistan. It has been, and still is the largest contributor of troops to the country and ISAF as well as the RSM, and spends more than \$132 billion in aid on rebuilding the country.

Under President Trump, a new US South Asia Policy was introduced in 2017, reaffirming its support for the Afghan government and pledging to continue the fight against terror by integrating military, economic and diplomatic instruments to achieve peace. This can be seen in the progress made in the peace talks between representatives of the US and the Taliban, which occurred without participation by the Afghan government.

Reaching a peace deal would promise an end to the long, expensive and bloody intervention. If the country were to descend into chaos after the withdrawal of international troops, it would be both humiliating and dangerous for the US. It would be proof of failure and inability of the US at stabilising a country and fighting an insurgent group much smaller and less equipped, a potentially serious threat to the US reputation.

The White House has also repeatedly stressed the importance of regional cooperation and involvement in negotiations, especially in regard to Pakistan, an eastern neighbour of Afghanistan, raising concern over suspected links between the government and armed groups operating in Afghanistan.

Nonetheless, there remain great uncertainties about the US government's current policies, especially in regard to troop withdrawal, owing to conflicting standpoints between the country's legislature and executive.

## **PAKISTAN**

It is pertinent to accept Pakistan as a legitimate stakeholder in the issue. Pakistan is not only affected by the outcome of the Afghanistan crisis but the conflict itself is a legitimate national security concern for Pakistan. After sheltering millions of refugees fleeing the Soviet

occupation, and coordinating the mujahideen resistance against the invaders, it has been an important player throughout the conflict. The shared porous border poses a threat to the stability and security of Pakistan, which is battling its own insurgency against radical groups including the so-called Islamic State. At the same time, it has been accused of supporting military proxies like the Haqqani Network, which is actively involved in fighting the Afghan government together with the Taliban.

Furthermore, the US has supported India, a longtime rival of Pakistan, as a key partner in resolving the Afghanistan conflict as part of its regional approach. India is already actively involved in the economic development of Afghanistan, having pledged 3 billion dollars worth of development projects. Both countries' involvement in Afghanistan manifests their aspirations for regional dominance. Exacerbating this conflict are the nuclear capabilities of both countries.

Despite suspending security assistance to Pakistan, the US maintains close ties and cooperates with Pakistan, especially in regards to peace negotiations.

## **RUSSIA**

Even though Soviet troops withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988, influence in the conflict remains. As mentioned above, Russia has been an active facilitator of the ongoing peace talks, having most recently organised a meeting between Taliban leaders and Afghan politicians.

Due to its regional proximity, achieving peace in Afghanistan is of decisive interest to the Kremlin, especially with the emergence of the so-called Islamic State in the country, which endangers neighbouring countries.

Moreover, senior US military personnel have accused Russia of directly supporting the Taliban, supplying them with weapons and training. Even though vehemently denied by the Kremlin, it is widely believed that there exist some kind of high-level ties between the Kremlin and the Taliban leadership, at least of the diplomatic persuasion, highlighting Russian influence in Afghanistan.

## **CHINA**

China, as an immediate eastern neighbour to Afghanistan, is also interested in achieving stability, due to fears over conflict spillover into the already fragile Xinjiang province. Most



telling for Chinese ambitions in the region is its One Belt, One Road initiative, an infrastructure project aiming to rebuild old trade routes connecting Europe to Asia. Afghanistan's geographical location as well as its natural resources are estimated to play a role in China's political approach to the Afghan conflict. However, the conflict between the US government and China regarding trade, as well as enmity between the US and Pakistan, which has become a close ally of China, has further increased tension and uncertainty. The Chinese government has nonetheless purposely maintained a low profile, stating that its "ambitions in Afghanistan are very limited" and that it "sees the US as the leading power in Afghanistan".

## **OTHER INTERNATIONAL ACTORS**

### **GOA (GOVERNMENT OF AFGHANISTAN)**

The government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan remains the primary actor and partner of the international community in this conflict, even though it only fully controls 36% of the country's districts, while 52% of districts are being contested by insurgent militias.

Even though it successfully negotiated a three day ceasefire in June 2018, it has been largely neglected in the recent peace negotiations.

### **UNAMA**

The United Nations Assistance Mission In Afghanistan (UNAMA), established in 2002 through a Security Council Resolution. It is tasked with coordinating with the Afghan government and supporting measures to achieve peace and stability in the country by strengthening the government's institutions and the rule of law, acting as a intermediary in conflict resolution and coordinating international support to the country.

### **RSM**

The Resolute Support Mission, which was implemented in response to the expiry of the active combat ISAF mandate in 2014, is tasked with supporting the Afghan security institutions through training, planning and oversight. It currently consists of 16. 229 international troops stationed in Afghanistan provided by 39 NATO members. During a NATO conference in 2018, financial support to the Afghan armed forces was guaranteed until 2024. The future of NATO's presence in Afghanistan is closely connected to the outcome of the ongoing peace talks, as the complete withdrawal of foreign troops from the country is one of the Taliban's most urgent demands.

### **TALIBAN**

The so called Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, widely known as the Taliban, are the main insurgent group, fully in control of 13% of districts in Afghanistan. After the US ended the

brutal Taliban rule in reaction to the 9/11 attacks, it has been the objective of the group to repel the foreign invasion, and to reassert control of the country. On its official website it is stated, that “The Islamic Emirate, which truly represents the Afghan nation has emerged from within the nation and its struggle is completely Islamic and national, has given tremendous sacrifices for independence of the beloved country, prosperity of public and for implementation of Islamic rule and is committed to carrying on its legitimate struggle through all means.” However, 82,4% of Afghans have no sympathy for the Taliban. In a statement in response to the Moscow negotiations, they have expressed the wish to “build an intra-Afghan Islamic system of governance in the country in consultation with all Afghans.”

### **ISIL-KP**

Since 2014, the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant – Khorasan Province (ISIL-KP) has been active in the eastern Khorasan Province of Afghanistan, as well as the rest of the country and has extended their area of operation across the border to Pakistan. In 2017, 10% of all civilian deaths in Afghanistan were estimated to be caused by ISIL-KP attacks. It has been known to purposely disrupt demining efforts by killing and abducting personnel. Apart from waging attacks against the central government, the group is also involved in clashes with other local militias, mainly the Taliban, which see a ideological rival in them. Recognising ISIL-KP's presence and threat to the stability in the region, the group is a frequent target of US air strikes in the region.

## **QUESTIONS A RESOLUTION MUST ANSWER:**

- What can the UN HRC do in order to address the recent escalations of violations of Right to self determination in the region?
- Can the UN HRC suggest any other relevant body of the UN to act in order to ameliorate the standard of the life of the inhabitants of the region? For example, what can the Human Rights Watch do to contribute? And can bodies such as the UN High Commissioner for Refugees be invited to aid the situation?
- Can UN HRC mitigate any happenings that might endanger peace and security in the region?
- What future steps can the UN HRC take to prevent any future conflicts?
- To what extent should the UN intervene in the situation in Afghanistan?
- If it should choose to intervene, what means/methods should it use to ensure that peace can be preserved between all parties?
- How does the question of Afghanistan affect the wider Middle-East geopolitics?

## **ADDITIONAL LINKS AND DOCUMENTS TO LOOK UP FOR IN-DEPTH UNDERSTANDING OF THE ROLE OF UNSC:**

1. 17 SEPTEMBER 2021 - S/RES/2596 - This resolution extended the mandate of UNAMA until 17 March 2022.  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/21.9%20res\\_2596\\_2021\\_e.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/21.9%20res_2596_2021_e.pdf)
2. 19 MAY 2020 - S/2020/415 - This was the 11th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 1988.  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2020\\_415\\_e.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2020_415_e.pdf)
3. 30 APRIL 2019 - S/2019/481 - This was the 10th report of the Analytical Support and Sanctions Monitoring Team submitted pursuant to resolution 1988 (2011).  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_2019\\_481.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_2019_481.pdf)
4. 14 DECEMBER 2018 - S/2018/1118 - This was the report of the 1988 Afghanistan Sanctions Committee.  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S\\_2018\\_1118.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_2018_1118.pdf)
5. 30 AUGUST 2021 - S/RES/2593 - This was a resolution that addressed recent developments in Afghanistan, including the Taliban's seizure of power and the 26 August attack at Kabul airport.  
<https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s%20res%202593.pdf>
6. 18 DECEMBER 2020 - S/RES/2557 - This resolution renewed the mandate of the Monitoring Team supporting the 1988 Afghanistan Sanctions Committee for another year, until 17 December 2021.  
[https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S\\_RES\\_2557\(2020\)\\_E.pdf](https://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BFCF9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/S_RES_2557(2020)_E.pdf)

7. 23 JULY 2018 - S/PRST/2018/15 - This was a presidential statement on the electoral process in Afghanistan, following the conclusion of the voter registration process on 18 July for this year's parliamentary and district council elections and for the 2019 presidential elections.

[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_prst\\_2018\\_15.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_prst_2018_15.pdf)

8. 19 JANUARY 2018 - S/PRST/2018/2 - This presidential statement emphasised the importance of advancing regional, interregional and international cooperation to achieve stability and sustainable development in Afghanistan and the Central Asian region.

[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_prst\\_2018\\_2.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_prst_2018_2.pdf)

9. 24 AUGUST 2017 - S/PRST/2017/15 - This was a statement on the review of the implementation of resolution 2255.

[http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s\\_prst\\_2017\\_15.pdf](http://www.securitycouncilreport.org/atf/cf/%7B65BF9F9B-6D27-4E9C-8CD3-CF6E4FF96FF9%7D/s_prst_2017_15.pdf)

**BEST OF LUCK !**