

**Statement by H.E. Ambassador Majid Takht Ravanchi**  
**Permanent Representative of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the United Nations**  
**On “the Situation in Afghanistan”**  
**Before the United Nations Security Council**  
**New York, 17 December 2020**

\*\*\*\*\*

*In the Name of God, the Most Compassionate, the Most Merciful*

***Mr. President,***

Iran and Afghanistan enjoy common religious, cultural, linguistic and historical backgrounds and our stability, socio-cultural development and economic growth are intertwined and mutually reinforcing. As our President stated very recently, we consider Afghanistan’s stability as our own stability.

Afghanistan’s decades-long insecurity and instability can end only through a comprehensive and inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, involving all Afghan factions, including the Taliban, supported by neighboring, regional and international partners.

The peace process must preserve and promote the past achievements, particularly the present Constitution, the right of the people to self-determination through elections, the right of ethnic and religious minorities and women, as well as the commitment to combat terrorism.

However, as peace and violence cannot go hand in hand, to reciprocate the good will of Afghanistan’s Government in the peace talks, the Taliban must halt its attacks against Afghan defense and security forces.

We support the peace talks and believe that its successful conclusion requires flexibility and patience by all sides, placing the interests of the people of Afghanistan above all other interests.

As we stated to SRS Lyons in her recent visit to Tehran, Iran continues to call for further engagement of the United Nations in the peace process and stands ready, in coordination with the United Nations, to further contribute to this process.

Afghanistan’s security situation remains a source of concern due particularly to terrorist acts perpetrated including by Daesh, whose presence is a serious threat to the security of Afghanistan and the region.

As a manifestation of external interference, the presence of foreign forces is another source of Afghanistan’s instability. However, as many countries have stressed, their withdrawal must be orderly and responsible and must not lead to a security vacuum in Afghanistan. Accordingly, prior and simultaneous to the withdrawal of foreign forces, Afghanistan’s military and security forces must be supported and strengthened.

Likewise, effective assistance must be extended to Afghanistan in combating the illicit production of and trafficking in narcotic drugs as a source of financing terrorism and other crimes.

A durable peace in Afghanistan cannot be established without promoting its economic conditions, which requires strong regional and international support.

For our turn, in addition to hosting over 3 million Afghans despite facing the savage U.S. economic war, we have promoted economic cooperation with Afghanistan. Linking this land-locked country to high seas and other countries through Iran's Chabahar Port is a prominent example of close partnership between the two countries.

Just last week, we inaugurated the Khaf-Herat railway, which connects Afghanistan's railway to Europe through Iran. The Presidents of both countries called the inauguration of this project a historical event, further strengthening bilateral and regional economic cooperation, thus enhancing the foundations of a durable peace and stability in Afghanistan.

The Islamic Republic of Iran is committed to contribute to a more secure and prosperous Afghanistan through further enhancing relations between two fraternal nations.

**I thank you, Mr. President.**