



Permanent Mission of I.R. of Afghanistan to the United Nations

**STATEMENT**

**BY**

**His Excellency Mahmoud Saikal, Ambassador and Permanent Representative  
of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan at the High Level meeting of g7+**

September 23, 2016

NEW YORK

بسم الله الرحمن الرحيم

Co- Chairs,

Distinguished delegates,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

First of all let me extend the apology of H.E. Salahuddin Rabbani, Minister of Foreign Affairs for not being here. Due to a sudden personal grievance facing one of his close relatives living in New York, he has to go and visit him in the hospital. He has assigned me to present the statement. I am Mahmoud Saikal, the Ambassador and Permanent Representative of Afghanistan to the UN.

I would like to thank the Republic of Kenya and Sierra Leone for co-hosting this side event. I am pleased to join you in today's important gathering. It is heartening to see that most participants from the Fourth g7+ Ministerial Meeting hosted by Afghanistan in early March this year are present here today.

Co-chairs,

2016 follows the first year when the world leaders adopted the ambitious and very comprehensive set of Sustainable Development Goals here in the UN. Conflict affected countries have always faced unique challenges to achieving such ambitious goals. A year since the adoption of Agenda 2030 may not be enough to learn what implementation in practice would look like in conflict affected countries. However, we must continuously review the implementation of SDGs to better contextualize them to our countries.

The nexus between peace and development is the daily reality of our countries. We have witnessed that conflict not only impedes but reverses decades of development gains. Being the first global development framework that underscores the crucial link between peace and development, Agenda 2030 is relevant to us.

Co-chairs, Ladies and gentlemen,

My country is currently in the third phase of its transformation process. After assuming full responsibility for our own security, we are now focusing on economic transformation, and moving away from an aid dependent economy towards self-reliance. The withdrawal of international security forces in late 2014 from Afghanistan had an adverse impact on our economic growth to a large extent,

yet our macroeconomic stability remains constant. In less than two weeks, the international community will gather in Brussels to focus on the development of Afghanistan.

Terrorism, which is a global phenomenon, places a heavy cost on our struggle towards a peaceful and resilient Afghanistan. While combating terrorism and violent extremism on a daily basis, the National Unity Government is highly committed to dialogue for peace with those extremists who are willing to denounce violence and adhere to our Constitution. Though the process has not tended to a clear roadmap towards sustainable peace yet, negotiations are underway in this regard, and the recently concluded peace deal with one of the warring factions is a testament to that.

Co Chairs,

Conflict and terrorism are the biggest obstacles to development and peace for our people. These challenges are common for many countries, yet the magnitude and scale of the problem are rarely understood at the global level. However, g7+ is a unique platform that not only facilitates sharing of knowledge, but also voices those challenges in the regional context and advocates for unified positions at the national, regional, and international level. The collective experiences of the member countries under the umbrella of g7+ can serve as the most relevant reference to the international wisdom on peace building and state building framed under the SDG 16 *“the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development, the provision of access to justice for all, and building effective, accountable institutions at all levels”*

Finally, Afghanistan, as one of the founding members of g7+ expects that the forum serves as the focal point for discussions in the implementation of peace building and state building agenda.

I thank you.