

(1) Kabul Again...

and provocative activities, in that regard, the Government of Afghanistan reiterates its strong condemnation of Pakistan's failure to adhere to its obligations under the principles of the US Charter, including Article 2, as well as international law and international humanitarian law," it said.

The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan reiterates its call on the Security Council to take necessary measures and action to bring about an end to the violations identified above.

"I should be grateful if this letter of complaint on Pakistan's continued activities is circulated as an official document of the Security Council," the letter added. Meanwhile, Pakistan said it regretted the Afghanistan government's 'twisting of facts' about some recent incidents of firing along the Pakistan-Afghanistan border.

The Foreign Office (FO) said: "As a matter of policy, Pakistan does not fire across Pak-Afghan Border. Cross border attacks by terrorists on Army/FC posts are responded to in self-defense only."

The office said Pakistan has formally shared location of these terrorist camps in the areas mentioned and has requested Government of Afghanistan to deploy its forces in these areas to bring it under their effective control.

"We hope Afghanistan will do the needful in line with the mutual understanding on these issues." (Pajhwok)

(2) Pakistan May ...

the nuclear-armed neighbors.

Bilateral tensions bubbled over again this month when Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi government revoked Kashmir's special status, under which people from the rest of India could not buy property or compete for government jobs.

In a move to ease restrictions on Kashmir's civilian population, the Jammu and Kashmir government said on Tuesday it was reopening high schools from Wednesday in some areas.

Afghanistan Civil Aviation Authority had suffered \$130 million losses in the previous closure of Pakistan air-space. (Pajhwok)

(3) Close to...

"We hope to have good news soon for our Muslim, independence seeking nation," said Suhail Shaheen, a spokesman for the Taliban's political office in Doha. U.S. officials engaged in talks with the Taliban in Doha were not immediately available for comment. (Reuters)

(4) Russia to Continue ...

terrorist group banned by the UN Security Council, trying to use it to achieve their own geopolitical goals in Afghanistan," Lavrov added.

According to him, Russia and India have similar views on the Afghan issue. "Today, we agreed to continue close coordination on the matter," the Russian foreign minister emphasized. (TASS)

(5) Afghanistan's...

"This is one of the most dangerous moments to be a human rights activist in Afghanistan. Not only do they operate in one of the most hazardous environments, but they face threats from both the government and armed groups. The Afghan government has a duty to respect, protect and support activists, to investigate threats and attacks against them, and to hold suspected perpetrators accountable," said Omar Waraich, Deputy South Asia Director at Amnesty International.

"The international community has an important role to play here. They have long paid tribute to the bravery of Afghanistan's human rights activists, but they have failed to recognize their achievements and effectively support them at this increasingly difficult time. The international community must step forward and provide Afghanistan's human rights community with the support they urgently need," Mr. Waraich added.

Violence, Threats and Killings

In the briefing, Amnesty International details how human rights defenders and activists have been intimidated, harassed, threatened, shot at and even killed in attacks that the Afghan authorities have failed to investigate and prosecute.

In October 2015, two staff members of Afghanistan's Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) were killed and two others wounded when a roadside bomb went off in the eastern province of Nangarhar, the report says. "As of today, the government unfortunately has not arrested anyone," an AIHRC official told Amnesty International. "We have not been informed of any

progress [in the investigation]."

In September 2016, Khalil Parsa, a human rights activist from Herat province was shot seven times while driving home. The attack came after he had received a series of threats, warning him to stop his human rights work.

When he reported these threats to the National Directorate of Security, Khalil Parsa was merely told to inform the security agencies the next time an incident happens. After leaving the country temporarily to seek safety elsewhere, he was told that the government will not investigate the attack against him.

In October 2018, 'Mohammed,' not his real name, was walking home in Kabul when he was chased near his home and shot, injuring his liver. Mohammed was not provided with any protection, despite appealing to the authorities.

Mohammed was told to buy a gun and "protect himself." He was forced to relocate for his safety.

'Hasiba,' not her real name, is a lawyer who defends women who have suffered domestic violence, are seeking divorce, or who face criminal charges.

Since 2017, Hasiba has received repeated threats of violence, including acid attacks. The police registered her case, but took no further action, forcing her to close her law firm for seven months. Threatened by Government

In December 2016, Afghan President Ashraf Ghani vowed to protect the rights of human rights defenders and activists. "Protection of human rights defenders is the sole responsibility of my government and its legislative and judicial branches," President Ghani told a conference hosted by the AIHRC.

Far from upholding this commitment, the government has itself been responsible for intimidation, harassment and threats against human rights defenders and activists.

In June 2016, the Afghan authorities deployed excessive force in Kabul's Zanaq Square to crush a protest against civilian casualties in the conflict.

At an earlier protest, one of the organizers told Amnesty International he was contacted by the President's Office and warned to clear away the protesters' tents because they could come "under attack" from armed groups - something he interpreted as a threat.

In May 2017, Afghanistan's record on torture was under review at the United Nations. Ahead of the review by the UN Committee against Torture, a civil society group was forced to remove the names of senior government officials mentioned in a "shadow report" before they submitted it.

"There is No Trust" Following failures to protect human rights defenders and activists and to investigate and prosecute threats and attacks against them, several human rights activists told Amnesty International that there is no trust in the government.

"There is no trust," human rights activist 'Ishaqzia', not her real name, told Amnesty International. "We understood that we would not be protected."

The feeling has been exacerbated by incidents where the authorities have accused the activists of making up the threats against them or refused to offer protection.

'Shahzad', not his real name, is a human rights activist who received threats from the Taliban on Facebook. "You are the servant of the Jews and in the infidels," one of the messages said, "we have informed the mujahideen to send you to hell."

When Shahzad reported the threats to the AIHRC, they forwarded them on to the National Directorate for Security (NDS), Afghanistan's intelligence agency. The NDS refused to take the threats seriously, deriding them as "fabricated." Two activists interviewed by Amnesty International said that when they reported attacks on them, they were not offered protection and instead told to buy weapons and protect themselves.

"Afghanistan's human rights defenders and activists have shown great courage despite the very difficult context in which they operate. Faced with grave threats to their lives and well-being, they continue to speak up against injustice and stand up for the rights of others. It is about time that the Afghan authorities and the international community stand up for their rights as well," said Mr. Waraich. (Pajhwok)

(6) UK Reaffirms ...

"In Afghanistan, we are working to this end by promoting the safety of journalists, supporting women journalists and working to promote access to information. The UK welcomes the steps that the Afghan Government has taken to improve the security of journalists, and we will continue to work with them and

media representatives to ensure that the media is as safe and free as it can be," the British ambassador said.

Ms. Blake announced £250,000 in aid to organisations and projects that will advance these priorities by developing the capability and capacity of female journalists outside Kabul, supporting journalists in tackling the security challenges they face and creating a platform to improve the access and management of information by journalists. (Tolo news)

(7) Roadmap...

are some areas which need to be explored first.

Challenges and limitations

Despite being rich in mineral resources, Afghanistan made little progress to develop its large-scale mines in the 20th and 21st centuries.

According to the road map, the main reason for this trend has been the existence of a wide range of impediments which could not be resolved until now.

In the roadmap, major problems have been identified in extractive industry sector, including transport, energy and water, land, rule of law, security, and procurement, past issues, social participation, environmental issues and human resources.

In this map, measures to promote transportation of large minerals and heavy metals to markets, significant investment, having a large infrastructure to provide energy for mining activities, a clear policy on water use and environmental standards and long-term investments are underlined.

In the document, the process of obtaining land in Afghanistan is called a "complex and uncertain process" for investors, but it is noted that Afghanistan has ratified the relevant law and given it to the Afghanistan Independent Land Authority.

With reference to oil and gas contracts through the Procurement for Transparency Office, it has been written that, in order to secure the most important projects, a four-year security work plan has been made.

The Ministry of Mines writes about issues remaining from the past that the database is refining contracts and is now solving legal and financial issues in previous contracts using the legal system.

The roadmap emphasizes on social partnership as there are mining places where social partnership is considered as important.

The ministry says part of income from mineral extraction should be spent in the mining areas.

About environment related issues, the roadmap says, "All mining contracts require environmental studies and National Environment Authority (NEA) is responsible for that."

About efforts at identifying gaps with regard to information of natural resources with relevant organs, the ministry said identifying required skills for a sustainable use of natural assets in the country and investing in systems and educational institutes for boosting capacities was its fundamental goal.

Not accepting challenges creates more problems

The roadmap calls not accepting shortages particularly of electricity and transport a challenge and a reason that contracts for Mes Aynak Copper Mine in Logar and Hajigak Iron Oxide Mine in Bamyán made little progress since contracts for these were signed.

Logar's Mes Aynak Copper Mine contains more than 12 million tons of copper and is one of the world's largest copper mines. The contract for extraction of this mine was signed in June 2008 between the Afghan government and MCC, a private Chinese company.

The B-C-D sections of Hajigak Iron Oxide Mine were awarded to a coalition of companies under the leadership of SAIL/AFISCO consortium of India while the A section of the mine was awarded to a Canadian company, Kilo Gold Mines, on December 28, 2011.

The roadmap says the mining plan for different parts of the country would be either developed according to the security situation of the mining area or security of such areas would be fully maintained before practical work was launched on them.

"We will decide whether we should resolve these challenges one by one or deal with them simultaneously on regional level. In other words, it may be difficult to deal with security, transpiration and electricity problems across the country quickly, but it may be applicable that we deal with some of these issues at the same time in a specific area, in such a situation, we should adopt our strategies for transportation, providing electricity, security and others with the mining strategy," the roadmap says.

Legal framework

A special and comprehensive framework can be effective in attracting investments because it can help ensure transparency and assurance in a contract.

The roadmap says despite the Minerals Law was amended three times after its approval in 2005, but four issues still persisted in the law that needed to be addressed.

The four issues include the right to decision, the bidding process, categorization of mines and royalty rate.

According to the source, one key issue the law explains is the right to decision of all involved parties and the law anticipated the right to decision for each five types of contract awarding, in all different process of approval.

Based on the law, issuing identification licenses, small scale mining, professional mining and rock and constructional materials mining needs approval of the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum, while the licenses of mines exploration and extraction requires the approval of High Commission for Investment and the Cabinet.

The roadmap says, "The right to decision mentioned in the Minerals Law authorizes the Ministry of Mines and Petroleum to approve contracts, currently the mines and petroleum minister has the authority to make decision on contracts for detection, small scale mining and constructional materials and big contracts are approved by the Cabinet, these changes should be made as soon as possible for decision making."

It says the current law should determine bidding process for all types of contracts and the law should clearly explain categorization of minerals.

The certain document shows that the current classification method is more dependent on the area of the mine to distinguish it from that type of license and the classification has caused confusion as both firms and employees of the ministry simply divide a mine area into smaller blocks just for the sake of achieving their approval and done in a way which did not need the Cabinet approval.

Instead of that, we have been looking forward to a classification scheme that decreases the types of licenses and the classification of licenses should depend on the type of minerals and the investment required.

For example, precious stones and construction materials in the mining category should be on small scale, the copper should have an extraction license; these changes must be applied in the law as soon as possible.

The source also stressed that all licenses should be reviewed by the technical board before being submitted to the High Council of Economic (HCE) and the Cabinet.

About royalty in the road map, it is noted that investor confidence and the flexibility of the state should be taken into account. Most countries have legal frameworks according to which they negotiate the rates of contracts and have adopted legal frameworks in which royalty rates are specified in the law.

The source further added "The outcome of such a change adds to investors' confidence during the extraction process." In addition, the exercise of such a legal change would give the government the power to turn exploration licenses into operating licenses. "If a company finds out what minerals are discovered during the exploration phase, there will be no need for financial negotiations."

Required reforms

The road map emphasizes that the MoMP main duties should be redefined for the development of mineral sector.

Currently, the MoMP has its own policymaking, regulatory, and operational departments, with a staff of more than 2,200 and by the passage of time the ministry will maintain its role in the policy-making sector and will give up its regulatory and operational roles.

Creation of industry and regional bazaars

The Ministry of Mines and Petroleum should create a licensing and accreditation process until the precious stones are processed in Kabul and exported to international markets in India, China, and other countries through air corridors.

The mentioned document also notes that as a result of investments made in the iron melting area within the last three years, the domestic production of this industry has reached 220,000 metric tons, which could meet the current demand of 33 percent population. Construction of railways and energy systems will meet the minimum demand

for two decades and will also stimulate economic growth in the medium term.

Result
In the roadmap, essential changes in the mining sector, if correctly applied, will take decades to turn Afghanistan from a low-income country into a middle-income country.

"The report provides a roadmap that will help us to focus on ensuring that Afghanistan's natural resources benefit every citizen in the country," the source said.

The MoMP writes, "The major resources of the country have been outlined and so as the strategy of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan, according to which, in the decades ahead, the mineral sector will act as the engine of Afghanistan's growth." (Pajhwok)

(8) Insecurity ...

districts because people there had not registered to vote.

He further said more than 500,000 people were all set to take part in the September 28 presidential election in the province.

Governor Abdul Qaium Rahimi assured the Afghan forces would ensure security of polling stations areas to enable people to exercise their right to enfranchise.

He said they would try their best to facilitate voting in 300 polling stations as they did in the past.

Meanwhile, Herat police chief Aminullah Amarkhel said security forces would ensure security for polling stations.

He said five to 15 security forces would be deployed at each polling station on the Election Day.

Provincial Council members say the participation of Heratis in the previous presidential election proved crucial and vital.

Mohammad Sardar Bahaduri, a member of the council, told Pajhwok presidential candidates after taking people's votes ignore their supporters after reaching the power corridors.

According to the IEC, around 30,600 people have registered themselves to vote in the presidential election. (Pajhwok)

(9) Italy Donates ...

the machineries would also help create jobs for more people and increase the factory's revenue, Ali added.

The personnel of the factory would soon receive theoretical and practical training for better functioning of the new machineries.

Nangarhar Olive Processing Factory was built 1983 by the former Soviet Union and its olive productions would reach national and international markets.

Some 1,050 people worked in the factory when it was first opened but currently only 60 personnel work in the factory. Successive Afghan governments ignored reviving the factory since its establishment 35 years ago. (Pajhwok)

(10) Taliban Kill...

Separately, Taliban militants killed a tribal elder named Haji Sangin in Gardi Serai district early Wednesday morning, Abdullah Hasrat, the governor's spokesman, confirmed to Pajhwok.

The Taliban have not yet commented in this regard. (Pajhwok)

(11) Taliban's Deputy ...

that the security forces also killed the deputy Red Unit Commander of Taliban during the same operations.

The Taliban group has not commented regarding the operations so far. (KP)

(12) 14 Civilians...

militia members, including a district commander, Baz Mohammad, in the Jawzjan province in the north, officials said.

The commander's son is a member of the Taliban in the area, said a relative who is also a provincial council member.

Eight Taliban fighters were also killed in the clashes.

The government, with the support of international forces, has over the years set up militias in the countryside to fight the Taliban, with more than 30,000 villagers paid and armed under the program, according to security officials.

But in 2017, the government decided to disband the militias and stopped making payments to them. Their numbers dwindled but many maintained their fight against the Taliban and more recently Islamic State.

Three militia commanders interviewed by Reuters in recent weeks said they were willing to surrender their arms and stop fighting if the Taliban vowed to end the war.

"I hope there will be nationwide amnesty after the peace deal, and no one will think about the past, we are all tired of fighting," said Saheb Khan, commander of a militia in Jawzjan province. (Reuters)