



نماینده‌گی دایمی جمهوری اسلامی افغانستان در سازمان ملل متحد

په ملگرو ملتونو کې د افغانستان اسلامي جمهوریت دایمی نمایندگی

نیویارک - ایالات متحده امریکا

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PERMANENT MISSION of THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC of AFGHANISTAN to THE UNITED NATIONS

New York - United States of America

30 April 2021

Excellency,

I have the honour to submit the letter and the Vision Statement of H.E. Dr. Zalmi Rassoul, former Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan and Afghanistan's candidate for the President of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 71/323.

I would be grateful if you could please circulate the attached letter and Vision Statement as a document of the General Assembly, under agenda item 4 (Election of the President of the General Assembly).

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.

Adela Raz

Permanent Representative of Afghanistan
to the United Nations

H.E. Volkan Bozkir

President

75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly

New York

New York, 30 April 2021

Excellency,

I hereby present my Vision Statement for the Presidency of the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly, prepared in accordance with General Assembly Resolution 71/323. I would be thankful, Excellency, if this letter and the Vision Statement could be circulated to the Member States of the United Nations.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was the first country to announce its candidature for the Presidency of the 76th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations as a member of the Asia-Pacific Group on June 19, 2009. It was a great honour to be officially nominated for the position by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

My Vision Statement is the result of careful consideration and analysis and extensive consultations with the Member States. I have met bilaterally with over one-third of the Member States of the United Nations to listen to their priorities and challenges. In addition, I have held consultations with over ten regional and political groups to gain their perspectives on the most pressing problems facing the international community and how the General Assembly may best respond. I will continue these consultations to further gain from the extensive knowledge and experience of the Member States.

As Afghanistan's candidate, I look forward to participating, in person, in the informal interactive dialogues mandated in resolution 71/323 on 6 May in the General Assembly Hall. I will seize this unique opportunity to present my vision, principles, and priorities, as contained in my Vision Statement, and to answer the Member State's questions. I further look forward to addressing questions that you, Excellency, have collected from civil society representatives and individuals.

Let me further extend my sincere condolences to the countries and families around the world that continue to suffer from the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and its consequences. In this challenging time, we need to exhibit unprecedented levels of unity and solidarity.

Together we can build back better by actively promoting the delivery of existing commitments in this decade of action.

Please accept, Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration.



Dr. Zalmay Rassoul

H.E. Volkan Bozkir
President
75th Session of the United Nations General Assembly
New York

Vision Statement

H.E. Dr. Zalmay Rassoul

**Former Foreign Minister of Afghanistan
and candidate for the Presidency of the 76th Session of the United Nations
General Assembly**

“Tested and Proven Leadership to ‘Build Back Better’ by Actively Promoting the Delivery of Existing Commitments in this Decade of Action”

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan was the first country to announce its candidature for the Presidency of the 76th Session of the General Assembly of the United Nations as a member of the Asia-Pacific Group on June 19, 2009. The presentation of this candidature served to realize Afghanistan’s duty and commitment as an active member of the international community, highlighting the success of the United Nations’ and the Government’s joint journey towards a democratic and prosperous Afghanistan. Our experience gives us a unique perspective on the value of solidarity in addressing the challenges faced by the international community. It is an outlook enhanced by a strong sense of resilience and belief that solutions lie in cooperation and unity among our people.

The 76th Session of the General Assembly will be unique. It will be a pivotal time and an opportunity to build back better from the COVID-19 pandemic, strengthen the United Nations and multilateralism, address our shared challenges, and take decisive steps to fulfill the 2030 Agenda and promote human rights. Therefore, it is a great honor to have been officially nominated for the position of President of the General Assembly by the Government of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan.

In support of my candidature, I am pleased to share my vision for the presidency to guide our collective efforts to tackle global challenges. **Under my leadership, the General Assembly will rise to meet the crisis, safeguard shared gains, strive to bridge differences, strengthen multilateralism, and deliver progress towards a shared and prosperous, greener and bluer future.**

I. My Background and Afghanistan at the UN

I have had the privilege to serve my country for over 20 years as a state builder and diplomat through times of critical change. I have spent my entire professional career, including over ten years as a medical doctor before joining government service, **supporting peace, conflict mitigation, and consensus-led cooperation, always putting humanity first.** I had the privilege to first serve my country as the Director of the Secretariat of His Majesty Mohammad Zaher Shah, the former King of Afghanistan. I later had the honor to actively participate in the historic 2001 Bonn Conference and contribute to the creation of the new democratic Afghanistan. I accompanied President Karzai to Kabul for the inauguration of the Afghan Interim Administration.

I have since served as the first National Security Advisor to the President for more than six years and as the Minister of Foreign Affairs for three years. I have helped to build the Afghan security architecture, created the first office of the National Security Advisor, expanded

Afghanistan's bilateral and multilateral relationships, united the international community in support of an Afghan-led and Afghan-owned peace process, strengthened regional cooperation and security, and rebuilt vital industries. **My tested and proven leadership experience in times of crisis will help the international community emerge from this global crisis and effectively build back better.**

Afghanistan was among the UN's first members and is driven by a conviction of the Organisation's ideals and principles, as contained in the Charter and enshrined in our Constitution. The UN further remains a central pillar in Afghans' lives through the indispensable work of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan and UN agencies and programs. Afghanistan's candidature is the culmination of years of investment by the UN, allies and friends in our democracy and governance, and a historic opportunity for the Afghan people to be represented within the highest office of multilateralism at a critical time in our history. The UN's vital partnership with Afghanistan and the people of Afghanistan's belief in the UN **strengthen my resolve and commitment to serve in the interest of Member States and fulfil the UN's highest ideals.**

II. My Vision and Pledge

My vision begins with the people of the world and the UN's duty to address their needs fairly and effectively. As the most representative intergovernmental body, the UN is our best hope for achieving global peace and security and sustainable development, addressing climate change, and expanding and protecting human rights and social progress for all. **Strengthening the UN, including the General Assembly, by reaffirming the Member States' commitment to multilateralism and international cooperation** is the backbone of my vision.

My vision is also informed by our unique moment in history. The world faces its greatest challenge since World War II, and the pandemic has exposed our system's vulnerability. **The 76th Session presents a critical opportunity and responsibility for States to come together and chart a course for the future based on global action and international solidarity.** My vision is to meet this moment by further strengthening the UN and guiding efforts to make it more representative and inclusive, including by implementing the UN75 Political Declaration. In so doing, I pledge to represent the membership as a whole, facilitate cooperation and never relent in my efforts to consider and reconcile Member States' interests and views.

III. My Principles

To fulfil its obligations and commitments, the UN needs a strong moral commitment to its original purposes and objectives as expressed in the Charter. **If elected, my foremost principle will be the service of the Charter,** and I promise to comply with the PGA's code of ethics. I will strictly follow the principles of independence, impartiality, and integrity. My presidency will be action-oriented and focus on delivery.

Consensus, cohesion, transparency, and a commitment to place people first are indispensable to fulfil the promise of the Charter and the 2030 Agenda. In executing my mandate, these will be my guiding principles. My Presidency will also seek to adopt a more inclusive, accountable, networked, expert-oriented, and gender and climate-sensitive approach in organizing and administering the Office and its mandate. The inclusion of civil society, in accordance with existing mandates, is central.

My team will reflect my principles and be assembled to ensure professionalism, dedication, effectiveness, and inclusivity. It will fully reflect the composition of the regions we serve and achieve gender balance. Staff members will be chosen following the highest standards of integrity, impartiality, efficiency, and competence and, above all, with the full awareness that they serve all the peoples of the United Nations.

IV. My Priorities

Today's challenges are unparalleled both in nature and urgency, and the need for global action in an increasingly connected environment is unprecedented. The 76th Session of the General Assembly is a critical opportunity for all Member States to come together and delineate a better future. **By building on the initiatives, achievements, and processes of former Presidents, I will ensure continuity while achieving progress.**

My foremost priority will be to ensure the continued functioning of the General Assembly. The 76th Session must realize the mandate it has received from previous years and include the successful organization of all prescribed high-level meetings and forums.

But the GA must go further and lead the world to build back better, greener, bluer and more equal from the pandemic. Priority will be dedicated to identifying effective ways to overcome the health and socio-economic impacts of COVID-19, financing for development and recovery, and supporting affordable and universally accessible vaccines through strengthened global cooperation. To achieve meaningful change, I will work closely with the Secretary-General and the Member States to implement the UN75 Political Declaration and support other reform processes, notably the General Assembly Revitalization process.

I will prioritize the implementation of the 2030 Agenda as a whole to fulfill all its goals and targets, with a special focus on poverty eradication, and other internationally agreed development programs. **To fulfil the 2030 Agenda, we need strengthened global coordination and unity and increased focus on equity, fairness and good governance.** I attach particular importance to vulnerable countries and people.

I will closely review the progress made in addressing the complex development needs and priorities of African countries, countries in special situations, countries graduating to a higher income per capita status, and middle-income countries. I will seize the opportunity presented by the Fifth UN Conference on LDCs and work with colleagues across the UN system to ensure it delivers on its promise and that its programme of action is sufficiently implemented across the work of the UN. I will focus on the particular vulnerabilities of Small Island Developing States and the full implementation of the SAMOA Pathway.

I will further focus on the hardship faced by people in vulnerable situations and the promotion and protection of all their human rights. The Assembly should promote sustainable solutions to address the challenges faced by migrants and forcibly displaced people. I will focus on the inclusion of people with disabilities and efforts to better address their needs. Promoting inclusive and equitable quality education for all will also be among my priorities.

I will maintain and further strengthen the current PGA's Advisory Group on Gender and the Board of Advisers for Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States.

The 76th Session will also be a critical time for our joint efforts against climate change and biodiversity loss. We are already living with a changed climate and urgent action is needed. If elected, **I will work to ensure the implementation of existing commitments while promoting increased ambitions** and support the follow-up from major global conferences, notably COP26. I pledge to mainstream climate sensitivity throughout the agenda of the Assembly and appoint designated personnel within my office to ensure implementation. Special focus will be placed on promoting resilience to deliver results and a better standard of living for the most vulnerable. I will also prioritize adaptation, climate finance, nature-based solutions, and climate-security risks.

An equally important part of the agenda is the prevention of conflict and the promotion of peace, justice, and inclusion. Therefore, I will **support relevant UN reform processes, including the Intergovernmental Negotiations framework for UNSC reforms and the GA Revitalization process, to help the organization become more representative and better consider today's complex realities.** I will pursue enhanced coordination with the Security Council to support preventive measures against armed conflict and international terrorism and defend the rights of people affected by conflict and the victims of terrorism.

Moreover, I will prioritize the achievement of gender equality, the empowerment of women, the protection and promotion of women's rights, and women's full equal and meaningful participation in public and private life. Priority will further be placed on youth and I will promote their empowerment and participation in the work of the GA. **Women and youth are essential agents of change and a cornerstone to achieving the SDGs, sustainable peace, and our inclusive vision for a better future for humanity.**

Lastly, the UN's mission requires close coordination among its bodies, Member States, international organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. My work will complement the priorities and agenda of the Secretary-General. I will work closely with all Member States and other stakeholders to promote synergy among the principal organs and other offices of the UN to further the organization's ideals and goals.

V. Final Note

With this vision in mind, I would like to affirm my service, respect, and devotion to all Member States. **I look forward to your valuable and kind support as we steer the 76th Session of the United Nations General Assembly through unprecedented times and strive to make the world a better place.**

30 April 2021
New York
H.E. Dr. Zalmay Rassoul