



**THE PERMANENT MISSION OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN
TO THE UNITED NATION**

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**Statement by H.E. Mr. Yashar Aliyev
Permanent Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United Nations
at the 56th plenary meeting of the seventy-second session of the United Nations General
Assembly under agenda item 39 "The situation in Afghanistan"**

20 November 2017

Mr. President,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Chief Executive of Afghanistan His Excellency Mr. Abdullah Abdullah for his statement. We also thank the delegation of Germany for facilitating the negotiations on the draft resolution (A/71/L.8), which Azerbaijan is pleased to co-sponsor. We look forward to its unanimous adoption.

Azerbaijan commends the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan towards implementing political, economic and social reforms and addressing complex security problems.

Well-being of Afghanistan, economic growth and regional cooperation are interlinked and dependent on the security situation in the country and the region. It is of utmost importance to demonstrate our resolve and strong will to continue jointly addressing the security challenges that the country is facing and enhance regional cooperation to that end.

Continued regional and international commitment and assistance to Afghanistan are crucial for maintaining the progress attained so far and fulfilling the country's aspiration to achieve long-term peace, stability and prosperity.

Enhanced engagement between Afghanistan and its neighbors is essential for the peaceful and stable future of the country and the region.

We commend Afghanistan's efforts towards integrating into the regional and global economy and developing trade with its neighbors and other partners through increased regional connectivity.

Over the years, Azerbaijan has fostered regional cooperation and has successfully developed trans-regional infrastructure with multimodal capabilities along the East-West and North-South axes.

The Baku International Sea Trade Port and the recently opened Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad will help develop transport and transit links and provide fast and reliable connection, increased trade and new business opportunities available for Afghanistan and other countries in the region.

Azerbaijan participates in the relevant international and regional political initiatives aimed at promoting peace, stability and sustainable development in Afghanistan, including the “Heart of Asia” Istanbul Process. Since its inception in 2011, the Istanbul Process has become an effective regional platform for enhanced cooperation, confidence building and dialogue.

The forthcoming Heart of Asia ministerial conference, to be held on 1 December 2017 in Baku, Azerbaijan, on the theme “Security and Economic Connectivity towards a Strengthened Heart of Asia Region” will provide an important opportunity for furthering discussions between the major stakeholders on a wide range of issues, including peace, security, economic prosperity and social welfare in the region.

We will continue supporting the stabilization, peaceful reconstruction and development of Afghanistan through bilateral cooperation and the relevant multilateral international and regional formats.

In concluding, I would like to reiterate Azerbaijan’s support for Afghanistan’s sovereignty, territorial integrity and unity. We wish the Government of Afghanistan every success in its efforts towards achieving a unified, peaceful and prosperous future for the country.

Thank you.