

August 25, 2008

THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION

DRAFT

PRESS STATEMENT

The Members of the Security Council are seriously concerned about the reported numerous civilian casualties, including women and children, caused by an air strike by the Operation Enduring Freedom (OEF) coalition forces in the village of Azizabad in Herat Province of Afghanistan on Friday, 22 August 2008. They strongly deplore the fact that this is not the first incident of this kind.

The Members of the Security Council reaffirm the need to combat by all means, in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, threats to international peace and security caused by terrorism. At the same time the Members of the Security Council recall that killing and maiming of civilians is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law and human rights law and in this regard reiterate condemnation of all acts of violence against civilians, including as a result of indiscriminate and excessive use of force.

In this connection the Members of the Security Council underline the need for the OEF coalition, the International Security Assistance Force, as well as all parties in Afghanistan to comply fully with all their obligations under international humanitarian law and human rights law, including the Convention on the Rights of the Child, and resolutions of the Security Council, in particular its resolutions 1325(2000), 1612(2005) and 1674(2006), and to take all appropriate steps to ensure the protection of civilians, in particular women and children.

The Members of the Security Council call on the OEF coalition to conduct in cooperation with the Afghan Government a thorough investigation into the incident in order to exercise justice and to prevent civilian casualties in the future.

The Members of the Security Council express their intention to keep the issue under constant review in the context of the Council's efforts to promote peace, stability and post-conflict reconstruction in Afghanistan.