



**Intervention by Msgr. John Putzer, Chargé d’Affaires, a.i.
Permanent Observer Mission of the Holy See to the United Nations and Other
International Organizations in Geneva
during the 31st Special Session of the Human Rights Council
“On the Serious human rights concerns and situation in Afghanistan”
*Geneva, 24 August 2021***

Madam President,

In these days, the Holy See has been following with great attention and deep concern the developments of the situation in Afghanistan. Indeed, Pope Francis has called on all people to pray with him “to the God of peace so that the clamour of weapons might cease and solutions can be found at the table of dialogue. Only thus can the battered population of that country – men, women, elderly and children – return to their own homes, and live in peace and security, in total mutual respect.”¹

The Holy See also calls on all parties to recognize and uphold the respect for the human dignity and fundamental rights of every person, including the right to life, the freedom of religion, the right to freedom of movement and the right to peaceful assembly. At this critical time, it is of vital importance to support the success and safety of humanitarian efforts within the country, in a spirit of international solidarity, so as not to lose the progress that has been made, especially in the areas of healthcare and education.

The Holy See, in hoping for a peaceful and swift resolution to the ongoing tensions, remains convinced that inclusive dialogue represents the most powerful tool for achieving such peace and calls on the entire international community to move from declaration to action by welcoming refugees in a spirit of human fraternity.

Thank you, Madam President.

¹ Pope Francis, words after the *Angelus* prayer, 15 August 2021.