

## **Peace in Afghanistan needed to end violence: Pakistan**

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**United Nations:** Peace and cooperation with Afghanistan will enable Pakistan to fully defeat the common threat from violent groups, Maleeha Lodhi, Pakistan's ambassador to the UN has said.

She said it would pave the way for the voluntary return of millions of Afghan refugees Pakistan still hosts, Dawn online reported on Saturday.

"It will open the way for the ambitious plans for regional development and integration we have jointly worked on," she said.

Her remarks comes after Friday's attack on Pakistan army air base by Pakistani Taliban guerrillas near Peshawar that claimed at least 42 lives, including 13 terrorists.

She said mutual respect for each other's national interests and sensitivities must be the bedrock of the future Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship.

While external parties could play a role in facilitating Afghanistan reconciliation they "cannot impose" a solution, she said.

Reconciliation and dialogue, she said, had to be between the Afghans themselves and "owned and conducted by Afghans".

Those "working overtime to poison Pakistan-Afghan relations were no friends of Afghanistan", she said, adding that both Afghanistan and Pakistan needed to be clear who their common enemies were.

- IANS