

UNSC asks Afghanistan to tackle 'alarming' extremist threats posed by Taliban and others

18/03/2017 21:33 by admin

United Nations: The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) on Friday asked the government of Afghanistan to tackle the extremist groups like the Taliban, al-Qaida and Islamic State affiliates which are posing serious threat to security and stability of the country.

UNSC - File Pic

The UNSC unanimously adopted a resolution that extended the UN political mission in Afghanistan until March 17, 2018.

The resolution also expressed serious concern at the presence and potential growth of IS affiliates which pose "serious threats to the security of Afghanistan and the countries of the region."

The Security Council reiterated its support for the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces "in securing their country and in their fight against terrorism and violent extremism."

Council members called for strengthened international and regional security cooperation to deal with violence in the region and attacks by the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, al-Qaida, IS, other extremist and armed groups, criminals and "foreign terrorist fighters."

The Taliban, who have been waging an insurgency against the US-backed government in Kabul for more than 15 years, advanced on a number of fronts in 2016. Afghan forces have struggled to combat the militants since the US and NATO formally concluded their combat mission at the end of 2014.

The government is also facing an Islamic State affiliate, which is seeking to expand its footprint in the country beyond the eastern Nangarhar province, as well as attacks by al-Qaida and other groups.

The UN's most powerful body expressed "deep concern" at the record number of civilian casualties reported in February and condemned suicide attacks, often in populated areas, and the deliberate killing of women and girls, including those promoting women's rights, and journalists.

According to the UN report, 3,498 people were killed in 2016, including 923 children, and another 7,920 people were wounded, the highest total of civilian casualties recorded since 2009 when the UN mission known as UNAMA began systematically documenting civilian casualties.

The resolution adopted by the council authorizes UNAMA to continue supporting the Afghan government including it coordinating international civilian efforts, organising future Afghan elections including the upcoming parliamentary elections, and facilitating the delivery of humanitarian aid.

- (With PTI inputs)