



شبکه زنان افغان

Afghan Women's Network

Afghan Women's Position Paper for Oslo Talks

January 23, 2022

Since the Taliban's takeover on August 15, 2021, dark shadows of injustice, discrimination, and destitution have fallen over the people of Afghanistan, particularly women and girls.

Millions face starvation, including more than one million children, as a humanitarian catastrophe sets in with unprecedented scale and speed. Fundamental rights and freedoms, including the rights to education, expression, employment, health, movement, political participation, assembly, and association have been drastically curtailed. Women protesters, human rights activists, journalists, and others have been harassed, intimidated, attacked, detained, abducted, tortured, or killed, including Alia Azizi, Tamana Zaryabi, Parwana Ibrahimkhail, Faisal Mudasser, Sahar Seerat, Seerat Safi, Hanifa Nazary. People have been forced from their homes and provinces as the Taliban confiscates property and land.

As the de facto authorities of Afghanistan, the Taliban are committing atrocities and gross human rights violations with impunity. Rather than taking responsibility, they focus on denial. They have failed to fulfill their promise of amnesty, instead torturing, disappearing, and brutally killing former security forces who were trained with billions of dollars and are vital to the country's security.

It is critical that no minister-level meetings take place with Taliban regime officials. This would appear to grant recognition which must rest on legitimacy alone. Nor should any other nations accept a request for a Taliban meeting in their capitals without the Taliban having made irreversible actions to guarantee women's equal access to education, work, and safety.

Prior to the Taliban's takeover, millions of women and girls were being educated and contributing significantly to the work force as political leaders, civil servants, journalists, doctors, nurses, teachers, engineers, and lawyers, as they do in many other Islamic countries. At least two million girls have now been out of school for 6 months, despite secondary school classrooms already being segregated by gender. Afghanistan will not thrive if more than half its population is imprisoned in their homes.

Despite the people's frustration with corruption in the former administration, the Taliban have failed to introduce reforms of their own. They have installed clergymen throughout all positions of power with no regard to merit. While spirituality is an important aspect of any Islamic society, merit is an important aspect of both governance and justice in Islam.

Afghan women are concerned that the government Norway is trying to normalize the relationship with the Taliban which can lead to official recognition of the group which is involved in gross human rights violations including war crimes. We are calling on the government of Norway and the participants of the Summit to not recognize the Taliban as a government and the peace talks must resume as soon as possible.

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We call on the Government of Norway and all the participants in the Oslo Summit to press the Taliban to:

Fulfill their promise of amnesty by forbidding attacks, torture, and the killing of former Afghan security forces and government civilians and by bringing perpetrators to justice;

Immediately release all women's rights and human rights activists, protesters, journalists, and other civilians who were detained for exercising their freedoms of speech and peaceful assembly;

Immediately open all girls' schools and universities, allow students to sit their exams for the previous year, and guarantee that schools at all levels will remain open to girls and young women of all ages;

Allow all women to return to work in all sectors without delay;

Commit to participate in talks on peace, reconciliation, and inclusive and rights-based governance with influential Afghans, including members of civil society, the media, women's rights activists, and victims' families, with women represented at all levels of the talks, and;

Respect and protect the fundamental rights and freedoms of all Afghan men and women that are enshrined in chapter two of the 2004 constitution, including freedom of the press, speech, movement, association, and assembly.

We call on the international donor community to:

Condition any ministerial-level meetings with Taliban officials on their first taking irreversible actions maintaining and implementing internationally recognized human rights standards, including ceasing detentions and human rights abuses of activists, protesters, journalists, and former security forces and government officials, and resuming inclusive peace talks;

Condition the acceptance of any future meetings with Taliban in foreign nation capitals on their first opening all school and all sectors of employment to Afghan women and girls of all ages;

Guard against any compromise on women's rights and human rights in the name of culture, religion, or expediency;

Provide humanitarian aid equitably throughout Afghanistan through United Nations agencies and international and local NGOs;

Ensure that women are employed at all levels of the humanitarian sector, from planning to distribution, constituting at least 35% of all aid workers in the country, and;

Exceed the 15% minimum threshold that the international donor community committed to allocate to gender programming in humanitarian settings at the 2016 World Humanitarian Summit, dedicating this specifically to women and women-headed households, and mainstreaming gender equality throughout the rest.

- Together Stronger
- Horia Mosadiq, Director of Conflict Analysis Network(CAN)
- Afsana Rahimi, Chairperson (Afghanistan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
- Manizha Wafeq CEO(Afghanistan Women's Chamber of Commerce and Industry)
- Spouzhmai Akberzai, member of AWN
- Habiba Ashna, the Liberty Coalition
- Fahimeh Robiolle, Lecturer & Vice President of CLUB France Afghanistan - France

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- Hassina Nekzad (Afghan Women's Organization for Equality (AWOE))
- Women for Peace and Participation
- Sonia Ahmadi, Afghan-Norwegian Women for Change (Norsk-Afghanske Kvinner for Endring).
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