



## **Highlights and Recommendations from zoom meeting with Afghan Women and Special Envoys attending Afghanistan meeting in Doha**

### **Afghanistan Women's Rights Concerns**

May 1, 2023

On Monday, May 1st, Afghan women representing diverse advocacy groups and coalitions from inside and outside Afghanistan met with a group of Special Envoys– from Qatar, United Arab Emirates, the United States, Indonesia, the United Kingdom, Norway, France, Sweden, and UNAMA–before the opening dinner for the United Nations conference on Afghanistan in Doha. This meeting was coordinated with the assistance of Ms. Rina Amiri, the U.S. Special Envoy for Afghan Women, Girls and Human Rights, who has been instrumental in uplifting the voices of Afghan women. Eight Afghan women from different parts of Afghanistan spoke about challenges concerning personal safety/security, justice and violence against women, access to employment and education, and health and humanitarian aid. More than 60 other Afghan women from various organizations and groups were present in solidarity. They had recommendations for the envoys which are listed below. **This meeting does not take the place of official representation by Afghan women in the Doha Conference on May 1-2, 2023.** As a collective of Afghan women we demand that women are centered in every peace talk, international conference and negotiations about Afghanistan.

### **Recommendations:**

#### Engagement with Taliban

- Don't be deceived by Taliban's promises. They cannot and should not be trusted. There is no moderate Taliban. For us they are all the same, the ones in Qatar, the Kandaharis and the Haqqanis. In terms of ideology they are all the same in the eyes of Afghans; but they have learned how to interact with international governments in different ways and play games to get what they want. We need you to see that and act in even more strategic ways. Taliban will not give women their basic rights without conditions and pressure from influential countries including the US, UK, Pakistan, China, Qatar, the UAE and others.
- Refrain from public statements suggesting recognition of the Taliban as such statements further strengthen Taliban's propaganda as the legitimate government.
- Refrain from compromising Afghans' rights in return for Taliban's cooperation.

- For the UN Secretary General to call on member states to stop issuing Taliban travel visas,
- All UN member states should stop funding the Taliban office in Qatar. In the past the US contributed to establishing the Qatar office. That office was opened for a specific purpose and that was to facilitate peace negotiations and a political settlement.
- Expel Taliban members and their families from Qatar, UAE and other Gulf Countries.
- Pressure the United Arab Emirates and other countries to freeze the assets of Taliban members who live in their countries and those who financially support or invest in Taliban businesses.
- Pressure the Pakistani government to stop funding madrassas that teach the Taliban ideology.
- Resume peace negotiations and political dialogue between Afghan women and the Taliban on the basis of transitional justice, reconciliation and accountability standards.
- Envoys need to travel to Kandahar and meet directly with Taliban leadership there.
- The Special Inspector General on Afghanistan Reconstruction, Mr. John Sopko testified last week that the US government knows the Taliban are taking part of humanitarian funds but not investigating or doing anything.
- Hold Taliban accountable for US or International commitments. Make it clear to them that delivery of money is contingent on accountability for those funds.

### Personal Safety and Security

- The situation has to change, the sooner the better. We want to be able to freely go to school, pursue education, be able to serve our own women and community members without the fear of being shut or imprisoned at home.
- For a better Afghanistan, our own women should be able to educate our own women. Our own women should be able to treat and cure our own women. Our own women should be able to provide services to our own women. For this to happen, we must educate future doctors, engineers, teachers and public servants. This must be a priority in any negotiation and settlements.
- From what we know and have seen as someone directly impacted, Taliban are not the people who will change. And thus, must not be recognized, must not be given a chance without guarantees.
- We do not want our futures to be given to someone like the Taliban to decide for us. And if no action and pressure is put on the Taliban, they will quickly become a problem for the region and for the world.

### Access to Justice

- The cases of violence against women should be investigated and the perpetrators should be punished.
- Victims of violence against women must have direct access to justice actors—judges, prosecutors, and women's defense lawyers. Taliban's extra judicial-legal decisions are not

and must not be a substitute for a justice system that does not comply with the minimum international standards.

### Minority Rights

- Do not trade off our rights in return for Taliban's empty promise of counter terrorism.
- Sanction the Taliban, the way the west has sanctioned pro war Russians.
- Do not turn a blind eye to Taliban's atrocities. They must be held accountable for their actions against Afghan women, men, children, and those who oppose their repressive policies.
- Pressure the Taliban to follow human rights conventions that Afghanistan has signed to ensure and protect the rights of all people living in Afghanistan
- Encourage the international community and the United Nations to provide serious support to the ethnic and religious minorities who are severely tortured and oppressed by the Taliban government.

### Education

- Demand that girls and women have equal access to all levels of education and areas of study.
- Reinstate women teachers and faculty to their teaching positions without fear of persecution and intimidation.

### Employment

- Women need to be able to work in all sectors of the job market without the requirement of a *marham*.
- Some of the most vulnerable households in Afghanistan are women led. They need to work and receive humanitarian aid through trusted organizations and women employees.

### Humanitarian

- We call on Gulf Countries to contribute to funding for desperately needed humanitarian aid in Afghanistan.
- Grant Afghans visas for medical treatment outside Afghanistan.
- Map and identify the most vulnerable households and issue special targeted aid to those families, including employees of the former republic and civil society who are denied the right to earn an income through employment, but downsize the overall UN footprint.

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