



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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at Afghanistan Mission's SIDE EVENT

Combating Gender Apartheid: The Situation of Women & Girls in Afghanistan

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(Please check against delivery)

Your excellencies, distinguished guests, dear colleagues, and friends,

Good afternoon,

On behalf of Afghanistan Mission, I have the honor to welcome you all and thank you for taking time out of your busy schedules to attend our side-event- *Combating gender-apartheid and the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan*.

I would also like to thank our co-organizer, Afghanistan Policy Lab at the Princeton School of Public and International Affairs, and co-sponsors Permanent Missions of Malta, the Dominican Republic and South Africa and the Georgetown Institute for Women, Peace and Security for supporting us to convene this meeting.

We are deeply concerned about the current situation in my country—particularly the systematic erasure of women and girls in society and violation of their fundamental human rights in Afghanistan. It is a matter that has far-reaching consequences not only for the individuals affected but for the progress and prosperity of our entire society.

It has been two years since the Taliban took Afghanistan hostage and created a social, humanitarian, economic and political crisis. Within this period, women and girls constituting half of the society have been suffering most. Afghanistan under Taliban rule has manifested as nothing less than a gender apartheid. This isn't just an Afghan concern—it threatens the very fabric of the shared values we, as the international community, uphold.

Taliban's rigid, archaic ideology refuses to embrace the benefits of modern science and technology that propel societies forward. Instead, its focus has been to intensify the establishment of Madrasas and religious schools, deliberately radicalizing the Afghan youth, compromising their future. Women, the pillars of any progressive society, find themselves increasingly banned from even the most basic education and services.

It has been 730 days, since Afghan girls are denied access to education under the oppressive rule of Taliban. Taliban leaders and fighters with radical ideologies and misogynistic mentality are against modern science and technology regardless of gender. They only believe in Islamic studies and the harsh interpretation of Islam as well as extremist teachings and ideas injected in their minds in Madrasa beyond Afghanistan.

After two years passed, the international partners should have realized that Taliban are not honest in their engagements and commitments and that they are not only capable of governance, but they are careless about the prosperity and well-being of the people of Afghanistan.

The situation paints a bleak picture for Afghan women and youth. In the absence of protective legal systems, there are credible reports of violence against women protesters, forced marriages and child marriages and girls and youth committing suicide. Their futures are jeopardized by autocratic and oppressive regime that fails to recognize their fundamental human rights. But amongst this despair, there are beacons of hope—brave women’s rights defenders and activists advocating for change, risking their very lives in the process.

We need a proactive global alliance, comprising effective and cohesive messaging, robust policy responses, collective and united actions. Such an alliance can steer Afghanistan away from its current dangerous trajectory. Together, let us champion the cause of gender equality, ensuring that Afghan women and girls have access to education, protection from violence, and representation in all spheres of life.

I urge you and all Afghanistan’s international partners for their continued engagement and stronger monitoring and reporting mechanisms of human rights violations, as well as humanitarian aid, ensuring its reach to those who need it the most, particularly women and children.

Here, I would like to commend and support the UNAMA and the Special Rapporteur’s work on Human Rights situation in Afghanistan. We need further reporting mechanisms to hold Taliban accountable for their egregious human rights violations and crimes against humanity.

Let's support the progressive and democratic forces including, women-led movements and activists within and outside Afghanistan, standing together to challenge and rectify the systematic gender-based discrimination.

We have a distinguished panel that we appreciate their presence with us and they will discuss it later and we look forward to their detailed insights.

For a brighter future for Afghanistan, and a testament to our shared global values, let's act decisively.

Thank you.