



SC/WPS-SCH/0910/SI
18 September 2024

Joint Press Stake-in Statement by the Security Council signatories of the Statement of Shared Commitments for the Principles of Women, Peace and Security

Security Council meeting on Afghanistan

We, the Security Council signatories of the Statement of Shared Commitments for the principles of Women, Peace, and Security (WPS), namely Ecuador, France, Guyana, Japan, Malta, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Switzerland, the United Kingdom and the United States of America and my own country Slovenia, reiterate our deepest concerns regarding the deterioration of the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Afghan women play an indispensable role in ensuring the prospect for a peaceful, stable, prosperous and inclusive Afghanistan, including the country's long term development. However, since their takeover, the Taliban adopted numerous measures, targeting women and girls and severely restricting their full, equal, meaningful, and safe participation in all spheres of economic, cultural, social, and political and public life.

We are counting more than 1,100 days of continued repression and human rights abuses against women and girls across the country, despite the Security Council resolutions 2593 (2021) and 2681 (2023). There is no comparison for this situation anywhere else in the world.

Afghanistan is a state party to various human rights instruments and is therefore bound by relevant international obligations and commitments and must comply with them, including the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. All parties in Afghanistan should respect these obligations. The systematic and comprehensive nature of these restrictions on the exercise of human rights of women and girls may amount to gender persecution and must stop now.

We condemn once again the issuance of more than 70 edicts and decrees restricting the enjoyment of the rights of women and girls issued by the Taliban, including the ban on education for women or girls beyond sixth grade, and the codification and expansion of many of these restrictions with the so-called Law on Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice. This decision and the enforcement powers granted to inspectors extend and widen the already intolerable restrictions on the enjoyment of women and girls' human rights' and fundamental freedoms, including by completely erasing them from public life, through silencing their voices.

These actions by the Taliban are a further obstacle in efforts to have increased engagement between the Taliban and the international community towards improving the lives of the Afghan people.

We once again urgently call on the Taliban to immediately rescind all discriminatory policies and practices that restrict the exercise of human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls in Afghanistan, including those regarding education, employment and freedom of movement and expression. Furthermore, we underline the importance of the work of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and demand the Taliban to let him full carry out his mandate. We urge all Member states to use their influence and join our urgent appeal to end these discriminatory policies and practices. We recommend that the restrictions against women and girls be taken into consideration in all relevant discussions of the Security Council related to the situation in Afghanistan.

We will also request the Secretary-General of the United Nations to ensure that restrictions on women and girls are discussed in engagement with all Afghan political actors, including the Taliban and that there is consultation, input, and meaningful participation of Afghan women, as called for in resolutions of the Security Council and recommended in the independent assessment of the Special Coordinator for a coherent approach among political, humanitarian, human rights and development actors. We encourage all stakeholders to do the same.