

WPS Shared Commitments Joint Press Stakeout Statement
February 26, 2024

We, the Security Council signatories of Shared Commitments for the principles of Women, Peace, and Security—Ecuador, France, Japan, Malta, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and my own country Guyana—reaffirm our strong commitment to advancing the rights and interests of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Today, the Security Council will receive updates on the Secretary-General's meeting in Doha, including on planned consultations towards the appointment of a Special Envoy.

It must be underscored that sustainable peace, stability and development in Afghanistan can only be achieved if there is an inclusive political process underpinned by respect for the rule of law and human rights of all Afghan people; a process in which the rights of women and girls are fully respected, and the voices of all Afghans are represented.

In this regard, we welcome the participation of various Afghan stakeholders in the Doha meeting which was held on February 18 and 19, including women civil society representatives.

We strongly condemn the Taliban's continued systemic gender discrimination and oppression of women and girls in Afghanistan and demand that the Taliban immediately rescind all policies and decrees that repress women and girls including restrictions on education at secondary and tertiary levels, women's right to work, freedom of movement and freedom of expression.

Women and girls must have full exercise of their human rights and fundamental freedoms in public, political, economic, cultural and social life.

We reaffirm the indispensable role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts, in peace-building, and in humanitarian response, and emphasize that women's equal partnership in the development, economy and political processes in Afghanistan is critical to progress.

In today's meeting, we will again insist on Afghan women's equal, meaningful, and safe participation and leadership at all levels and stages of decision-making, including in all fora and mechanisms seeking to advance international engagement on Afghanistan.

Afghanistan has committed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is party to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, and other human rights conventions. Afghanistan's international obligations must be respected.

There must be accountability for human rights abuses and crimes against women and girls.

Harsh winter conditions and natural disasters are compounding the already dire humanitarian situation in Afghanistan. We call on the Taliban to ensure that women are part of the needs

assessments, planning and delivery of humanitarian aid, recognizing that their absence is having negative impacts on such aid reaching women, children and older persons.

We reaffirm the critical importance of UNAMA's work and commend the extraordinary efforts of UNAMA, other United Nations agencies and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan in support of Afghan women and girls.

We, the signatories of the WPS Shared Commitments, remain fully committed to improving the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan.