



JOINT ORAL STATEMENT

Item 2: Enhanced Interactive Dialogue on Afghanistan
HRC MUST URGENTLY ESTABLISH AN INDEPENDENT INTERNATIONAL
ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM
UN Human Rights Council
60th session
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Mr. President,

The Taliban continue to intensify draconian restrictions on the people of Afghanistan. While the Taliban's attack on the rights of women and girls may amount to the crime against humanity of gender persecution, those critical of their draconian rules and policies continue to face arbitrary arrest, detention, and enforced disappearance.

The Taliban's rules, decisions, and practices deprive Afghans of the free enjoyment of their human rights, and they particularly discriminate against women, as well as ethnic and religious minorities. For example, early in the year, UNAMA reported that the Taliban in Badakhshan province forced at least 50 male members of the Ismaili (Shia) community to covert to Sunni Islam, and those who refused were subjected to physical assaults, coercion, and death threats.

As the humanitarian crisis continues to deepen – exacerbated by natural disasters such as the recent earthquake, states, particularly Iran and Pakistan, have taken an unprecedented move of continuing mass forced deportations of Afghan refugees and asylum seekers including former government officials, HRDs, journalists and dissidents who are particularly at risk of human rights violations and abuses at the hands of the Taliban once they return.

The catastrophic human rights situation in Afghanistan builds on a long-standing culture of impunity that results from a persistent lack of accountability for human rights violations and abuses as well as crimes under international law for over four decades. Significant steps must be urgently taken towards accountability if this vicious cycle of impunity is to be broken.

We urge this council to urgently establish an independent international accountability mechanism to investigate, collect, consolidate, preserve and analyse evidence of past and ongoing crimes under international law and other human rights violations and abuses committed in Afghanistan and prepare files to facilitate and expedite fair and independent criminal proceedings.

Thank you.