



51st regular session of the UN Human Rights Council
Item 2: Enhanced interactive dialogue on the on the situation of human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan

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On behalf of Asian Forum for Human Rights and Development (FORUM-ASIA) and International Service for Human Rights (ISHR)
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Mr. President,

As we speak here today, millions of women and girls have been simply wiped out from public life in Afghanistan. The system of forced segregation and persecution of women and girls imposed by the Taliban can only be described as gender-apartheid.

The Taliban has banned girls from attending schools, and women from working, and travelling or accessing health care and other essential services without a male guardian. Women remain cut off from humanitarian aid. With the Taliban's harsh restrictions on women and girls, half of the Afghan population has been denied a say in the discussions about the future of their country.

Over the past one year, Taliban has shown no intention to respect and protect human rights, especially of Afghan women and girls. Instead, arbitrary arrests, enforced disappearances, rape, torture, and extrajudicial killings of women and girls have escalated. Women peacefully protesting the Taliban's policies have been subjected to violent retribution demonstrating the Taliban's intention to crush all opposition to its rule. Women human rights defenders inside the country face enormous challenges to monitor and document human rights violations in the present context, and demand access to resources to be able to meaningfully continue their work.

Furthermore, deepening economic and humanitarian crisis has exacerbated existing problems such as forced and child marriage, with increasing reports of families offering children as young as 3 years old for future marriages in return for dowry.

In the complete absence of the rule of law and justice under Taliban rule, this Council remains one of the only avenues for accountability for Afghan women and girls. We welcome your statements of solidarity with Afghan women and girls, and condemnation of Taliban's policies today. But they are meaningless without concrete action. We call on the Council to demonstrate sincerity of your words and genuine commitment to solidarity by establishing an international accountability mechanism to hold the Taliban accountable for their atrocities against women and girls.

Thank you.