



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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**at the High-Level Meeting on the Twenty-Fifth Anniversary of the International
Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women**

25 November 2024

NEW YORK

(Please check against delivery)

Mr. President, Excellencies, Distinguished Delegates,

Today, as we commemorate the 25th anniversary of the International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women, we are reminded of the ongoing and escalating crisis facing Afghan women and girls. Their courage in the face of systemic oppression stands as both an inspiration and a call to action for the international community.

Before the Taliban's military takeover in August 2021, Afghanistan had made noticable progress, enacting national laws to address gender-based violence and empower women. Women were advancing in education, leadership, and civic participation, embodying hope for a future of equality. Tragically, this progress has now been utterly erased.

Since the return of the Taliban to power, Afghan women have seen their fundamental rights stripped away. They have been systematically excluded from public life, denied access to education beyond primary school, and barred from many forms of employment. The ban on women working with NGOs has not only undermined gender equality but also worsened humanitarian conditions for millions.

We strongly condemn the Taliban's actions and policies against Afghan women, which are neither reflective of true Islamic directives nor aligned with the culture and values of the people of Afghanistan. These regressive measures represent a profound betrayal of Afghanistan's rich history of women's rights and empowerment.

This gender apartheid is exacerbated by violence—physical, psychological, and structural—that Afghan women and girls endure daily. Forced marriages, restricted mobility, and a lack of access to justice perpetuate cycles of abuse. The voices of Afghan women, however, refuse to be silenced. They continue to resist, often at great personal risk, demanding recognition of their rights to education, freedom, and dignity.

The international community and the United Nations have a moral and legal obligation to support Afghan women through a united and coherent approach with tangible actions. This includes holding the Taliban accountable for their

actions under the existing international law mechanisms including ICC and ICJ, upholding human rights in all engagements, ensuring that humanitarian aid reaches everyone in need, and amplifying the voices of Afghan women on global platforms. Let us not forget that violence against women anywhere undermines gender equality everywhere.

As we reflect on the theme of this day, let us honor the resilience of Afghan women by committing to concrete actions. These actions must center their leadership, protect their rights, and guarantee that no woman or girl is left behind. In the words of an Afghan activist, "Our freedom is tied to yours; our struggle is global."

I thank you.