



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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Mr. Chair,

Afghanistan welcomes the Secretary-General's reports and the Doha Political Declaration adopted at the Second World Summit for Social Development. Its commitments to poverty eradication, decent work and social inclusion must translate into meaningful progress for the Afghan people.

Five years after the Taliban's forced takeover, poverty, displacement and climate shocks are compounded by policies that systematically exclude women and girls from education, employment and public life. There can be no sustainable social development while half the population is denied its fundamental rights.

UNICEF warns that, if these restrictions persist, Afghanistan risks losing up to 20,000 women teachers and 5,400 women health workers by 2030. The consequences would extend across generations, depriving communities of essential services and undermining Afghanistan's recovery.

Afghan men and young people also face shrinking opportunities for decent work and meaningful participation in public life. Many qualified professionals and educated youth are unable to contribute their skills through public service and productive employment.

Unemployment, exclusion and diminishing prospects are driving many to leave the country, depleting the human capital essential to Afghanistan's recovery. Sustainable social development requires opportunities for all Afghans women and men alike and a future in which young people can learn, work and contribute to rebuilding their country.

We call on the Taliban to immediately reverse these discriminatory policies and restore women's and girls' full access to education, employment and public life.

Community-based education, literacy programmes and distance learning deserve sustained support, but cannot substitute for reopening secondary schools and universities to women and girls.

Mr. Chair,

We urge donors and UN partners to provide predictable support for essential services, social protection and livelihoods, including for returnees and host communities. Humanitarian assistance must be linked to opportunities for families to rebuild their lives and must not be held hostage to political deadlock.

These efforts must include accessible healthcare, rehabilitation and income support for older persons and persons with disabilities. Young people need opportunities to learn, earn and participate meaningfully in shaping their country's future.

We also call for the removal of all restrictions on Afghan women working for the United Nations and humanitarian organizations, and for sustained support to Afghan civil society, especially women-led organizations. Women must be able to help design and deliver the assistance their communities need. Aid must reach people safely, equitably and without discrimination.

Lasting social progress requires inclusive, representative and accountable governance, grounded in the will of the Afghan people, human rights and the rule of law. Afghan women and men must have a meaningful voice in determining their country's future.

Our people deserve more than survival. They deserve dignity, opportunity and a future in which no one is left behind.

I thank you.