



Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

Statement

by

H.E. Mr. Naseer Faiq

Chargé d'affaires of the Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

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Briefing by Ms. Alexandra XANTHAKI, Special Rapporteur in the field of Cultural Rights

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Mr. Chair,

We thank Ms. Xanthaki, the Special Rapporteur for her report.

Cultural rights are part of human rights and must be respected. Afghanistan's cultural diversity belongs to its people. No illegitimate regime has the right to erase it or impose a single ideology upon our society.

Under Taliban rule, cultural repression is systematic. A wide range of cultural practices, artistic expressions, public gatherings and traditional celebrations, including Nowruz and Yalda, have been prohibited or obstructed.

Music is banned, even at weddings, and musical instruments have been confiscated and destroyed. Artists and musicians face intimidation and the loss of their livelihoods, threatening the preservation and transmission of Afghanistan's living cultural traditions.

Women and girls are excluded from secondary and higher education and face severe restrictions on cultural participation. Restrictions on women's singing silence their creative voices and impoverish our entire society.

We are deeply concerned about restrictions on linguistic diversity and changes to public names and signage that marginalize communities' languages and heritage. Imposing cultural uniformity deepens divisions and undermines our shared identity.

The expansion of Taliban-controlled "jihadi madrasas" raises serious concerns about ideological indoctrination, promotion of extremism and the erosion of comprehensive education. Afghan youth deserve scientific learning, critical thinking and respect for cultural diversity.

Neither religion nor culture justifies intolerance and discrimination. All Afghans, including ethnic, religious and linguistic minorities, must be free to shape cultural life.

We strongly condemn Taliban's discriminatory policies and urge support for threatened artists, independent educators and community-led heritage preservation. International engagement must not normalize these policies and must demand the reversal of cultural restrictions and women's exclusion.

Thank you.