

Permanent Mission of Afghanistan to the United Nations

STATEMENT

BY

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Mr. President,

We thank the President of the Human Rights Council, Ambassador Sidharto Reza Suryodipuro, for presenting the Council's report. Twenty years after its establishment, the Council's role in addressing serious human rights violations and promoting accountability remains as important as ever. For the people of Afghanistan, its work has particular significance.

Five years after the Taliban's military return to power, Afghans continue to live under a system of repression that reaches into nearly every aspect of their lives. Women and girls face institutionalized discrimination, segregation and exclusion that amount to the crime against humanity. They are denied education, employment and participation in public life, with devastating consequences for their dignity, livelihoods and future.

But repression extends far beyond women and girls. Hazaras and other minorities, journalists, human rights defenders, former security forces and ordinary citizens face arbitrary detention, torture, enforced disappearances, forced displacement and reported extrajudicial killings. Through discriminatory decrees, restrictions on fundamental freedoms and the dismantling of legal protections, the Taliban have made fear, intimidation and exclusion instruments of governance.

These violations are taking place amid a deepening political, humanitarian and economic crisis. Millions depend on humanitarian assistance, poverty and unemployment remain widespread, and young Afghans are increasingly deprived of opportunities and hope for their future.

Mr. President,

Against this background, Afghanistan welcomes Human Rights Council resolution 63/1, adopted by consensus. We thank the European Union for its leadership and all delegations that supported its adoption. The resolution sends an important message: the fundamental rights of the Afghan people are not negotiable, and those responsible for serious violations must be held accountable.

Thus, we attach particular importance to four priorities.

First, continued independent monitoring. We welcome the extension of the mandate of Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett and reaffirm our full support for his work. The Taliban must allow him safe and unhindered access to Afghanistan.

Second, accountability. We welcome the Council's decision to establish the Independent Investigative Mechanism for Afghanistan and call for its prompt operationalization, with adequate resources and staffing. We also welcome the arrest warrants issued by the International Criminal Court and the accountability initiative undertaken by Australia, Canada, Germany and the Netherlands under CEDAW. Those responsible for serious human rights violations must know that accountability cannot be avoided indefinitely. Impunity must end.

Third, principled international engagement. We remain concerned that continued engagement with the Taliban, without meaningful progress on human rights, risks normalizing their discriminatory policies. Engagement must be guided by clear benchmarks, measurable improvements and respect for Afghanistan's international obligations. Political engagement must not come at the expense of the fundamental rights of Afghan women and girls.

Fourth, international responsibility and political action. Humanitarian assistance must continue to reach those in need, including through the full participation of Afghan women. We also urge States to protect Afghan refugees, respect the principle of non-refoulement and address the risks facing Afghans abroad.

At the same time, we must recognize that Afghanistan's human rights crisis cannot be separated from its underlying political crisis. We therefore reiterate our call for an Afghan-led, UN-facilitated political process leading to inclusive, representative and accountable governance, with meaningful participation by women, young people, minorities and civil society. The future of Afghanistan must reflect the will and rights of its people.

Mr. President,

The real measure of this resolution will not be the strength of its language, but the difference it makes in the lives of Afghans: whether a girl can return to school, a woman can work freely, a survivor can seek justice, and a young person can look to the future with hope. The commitments made in Geneva must be translated into action here in New York, with the necessary resources, sustained attention and political will.

Thank you.