



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

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Agenda item 2

**Annual report of the United Nations High Commissioner  
for Human Rights and reports of the Office of the  
High Commissioner and the Secretary-General**

## **Written statement\* submitted by Organisation internationale pour les pays les moins avancés (OIPMA), a non- governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[6 February 2023]

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\* Issued as received, in the language of submission only.



## **Strengthening The Promotion and Protection Of Human Rights In Afghanistan**

Since 2021, the Taliban has taken over as de facto power in Afghanistan leading to the political transition and accelerating pace of serious violations of international humanitarian law, including war crimes and other forms of serious human rights violations and entrenching impunity. Already precarious humanitarian situation became worst due to the drought, economic crises due to the suspension of foreign aid, the Covid-19 pandemic and freezing of the government assets and sanctioning against the de facto authority-Taliban by the international government. Accompanied by the rise of the attack on minorities, enforced disappearance of civilians, killing of the officials of the former government, the violent suppression of freedom of speech and demonstration, gender persecution, imposition of surveillance on civilians' houses and search houses and detention of young men and arbitrary exercise of power on individual who raises political and social concern in Afghanistan.

Women's education has been one of the Afghan government's most important achievements over the past 20 years. Nearly 30 per cent of adult women could read and write in 2018 which facilitated their access to the labour market. Women accounted for more than 20 per cent of the labour force and were employed in various sectors in 2019. In 2020, however, the percentage dropped to 15 per cent due to the difficult economic situation. Currently, no data is available on the employment rate of women.

The women and girls are continued to be barred from secondary education. On 23 January 2023, UNESCO reported that between 2001 and 2018, Afghanistan recorded a tenfold increase in enrollment across all education levels, from roughly one million to 10 million students. The number of girls in primary school increased from almost zero to 2.5 million. By August 2021, they accounted for four out of 10 primary school students. Women's presence in higher education had also increased almost 20-fold during the same period from 5,000 students in 2001 to over 100,000 in 2021. Yet today, 80 per cent of school-aged Afghan girls and women, 2.5 million, are out of school. The order suspending university education for women, announced in December, affects more than 100,000 attending public and private institutions. This further hinders the socio-political growth of women and their social status in society. This concern has been raised by several international human rights organizations.

The comprehensive and regressive rules enforced by the Taliban have prevented women from exercising their fundamental rights, including expression, movement, work, and education. Additionally, these strict rules enforced on women and girls include prohibiting them from traveling or to leave their homes without accompanying their male family members, going to the workplace and prescribed the strict adherence of clothing for women to cover faces in public. The de facto Taliban regime entirely consisted of men and has allowed no women representation in governance at any level in the civil services.

The issue of Sexual and gender-based violence is another concern in Afghanistan as there is no official data available. However, Between January and June 2021, the de facto MoWA of the de facto Taliban government has registered 1,518 cases of violence against women, including 33 murders. But no data is available for the rest of the year. The situation for women living in Afghanistan remains appalling. Harassment, forced and child marriage, forced prostitution and other forms of gender-based violence are manifested.

The ban on women's legal support mechanisms and NGOs have created catastrophic effects on the lives of tens of millions of Afghans, particularly vulnerable groups who are in dire need of humanitarian support. This has not only deprived women of having livelihood but also of supporting their communities.

Further, the ban on NGOs has created difficulty in planning and assessing on-the-ground situations to provide humanitarian support. The target killings of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists have dramatically increased since 2020 in Afghanistan. The groups which have mostly targeted are women human rights defenders, members of civil society organizations, and journalists for challenging the draconian and repressive policies.

More than 90 percent of Afghans face the abysmal reality of being deprived of food and prone to hunger and disease. One million children under 5 – are especially at risk of dying

due to acute malnutrition. It is pointed out in various reports that people have nothing to eat, the situation is dire especially in villages.

Adding to this backdrop, drought, and restrictions on access to fertilizers, fuel and other agricultural inputs due to its spike in price and lack of availability have detrimentally impacted the livelihood of the farmers and herders. The agricultural sector in Afghanistan, one of the country's main sources of income has completely collapsed.

The reason for the economic collapse of Afghanistan can be construed as being due to many factors such as the collapse in most of the family's income, followed by the takeover of the Taliban and suspension of foreign funding and support by the international bodies and governments.

While addressing the humanitarian crises, Martin Griffiths, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator pointed out, 'Without this being funded, there won't be a future we need this to be done, otherwise, there will be outflow, there will be suffering'. The situation of displaced persons is appalling in 2021, some 700,000 people were newly displaced due to the conflict in 33 out of the 34 provinces which amount to a 3.4 million population. Some 80% of the displaced population in 2021 were women and children. The International Organization for Migration's (IOM) recorded griming figures of deaths and unresolved loss of countless families during migration journeys to Europe since 2014.

There is a structural failure on the part of international borders to provide a safe place for the refugees coming from Afghanistan. The deaths can be avoided through prompt, effective and preventive assistance to migrants in need by the destination countries. Therefore, there is an urgent need to raise concerns about the fate of their compatriots and the people remaining in Afghanistan. In the end, it is not possible to change what destruction is already done, though, the hope is that the international policies focus on the preventing a repeat of the immense costs in blood and treasure seen in Afghanistan.

As highlighted above, Afghanistan is at its darkest and most critical point. OIPMA urges the Human Rights Council to fulfill its prevention mandate by:

1. To create extensive pressure on the Taliban, particularly on the issues of education, access to women to employment, and protecting the rights of minorities. Additionally, the international community must hold the Taliban accountable to have an inclusive de facto government, equal recognition for women, education and protection for women and girls.
2. Calling for women's meaningful participation in the negotiation, to introduce human rights standards and the protection of Human Rights Defenders and women and girls' rights to be articulated as key benchmarks for any peace process and subsequent peace agreement.
3. To put extensive pressure on the Taliban to immediately lift the ban on women working with national and international NGOs. to change the situation both economically and in terms of civil liberties.
4. Establishing Framework for continuous engagement with United Nations to pave the way for the implementation of Sustainable Development Goals and for durable solutions for the refugee and displaced persons, and overall humanitarian condition in Afghanistan.
5. Urging the Security Council, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime and World Health Organization to create pressure on the Taliban to respect the international standards and the International Human Rights Instruments.
6. Urging the Security Council to deploy peacekeeping bodies at the local and national level to analyze the war crime situation in Afghanistan.
7. Formulating an international mechanism to preserve information on serious human rights violations against women and children and minorities gathered

by the fact-finding and documentation processes, for future accountability proceedings.

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