



Security Council

Distr.: General
11 May 2022

Original: English

Letter dated 10 May 2022 from the Permanent Representatives of Ireland and Mexico to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

Ireland and Mexico, as Co-Chairs of the Informal Expert Group on Women and Peace and Security of the Security Council, are writing in response to the 7 May announcement by the Taliban that women in Afghanistan will be forced to fully cover their faces in public and banned from leaving home, except in cases of necessity. We are appalled by this decision, which clearly contravenes basic principles of human rights and further confirms that the Taliban has no intention of promoting, respecting or upholding the rights of women and girls or of honouring the multiple commitments that they have made to Afghan women and to the international community in recent months.

Since the takeover of the Taliban in August 2021, the Informal Expert Group has met twice to discuss the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan. On 18 February, we heard from the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Afghanistan and Head of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA), Deborah Lyons, and the United Nations country team. The Informal Expert Group heard that women have been systematically erased from public life, that those who have protested have been violently repressed, abducted, killed or subjected to other forms of reprisals and that girls continue to be denied their education. We heard that women's right to freedom of movement had been greatly restricted already after a directive issued by the Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice and that their access to essential services had been severely curtailed. In a country suffering such a grave economic and humanitarian crisis, the attack on the fundamental rights of women and girls by the Taliban is deeply exacerbating suffering and eroding the foundations needed to create a peaceful and inclusive society and to pave the way for sustainable development.

The Security Council has provided UNAMA with a strong mandate in terms of monitoring violations, abuses and reprisals committed against women, and to support and promote the full protection of the human rights against women and girls. For the first time, the Council mandated UNAMA to mainstream women's rights throughout its work. We fully support UNAMA as it undertakes its new mandate. We also underline the importance of supporting Afghan civil society, including women peacebuilders, women human rights defenders and women's organizations inside and outside Afghanistan, in monitoring the human rights situation.

The decision by the Taliban shows an utter disregard for the Council's clear message that women must play a full, equal and meaningful role in all aspects of public and political life in Afghanistan. Moreover, the Taliban must immediately



comply with Afghanistan's international obligations on human rights, including those under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women.

There has been a clear message from the international community that the Taliban's gross abuses of the rights of women and girls will not be tolerated. We call upon all members of the Security Council to unite and to express clearly their rejection of the Taliban's actions, which are systematically eroding the rights of women and girls.

We would be grateful if the present letter could be circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Geraldine **Byrne Nason**
Permanent Representative of Ireland to the United Nations

(Signed) Juan Ramón **de la Fuente Ramírez**
Permanent Representative of Mexico to the United Nations
