

HUNDREDS OF AFGHAN WOMEN AND ACTIVISTS CALL FOR INCLUSION IN THE AFGHANISTAN PEACE PROCESS

Statement is led by Time4RealPeace, a coalition of Afghan women, men, young people, civil society groups, and individual activists

30 high-profile figures have signed on, including Margaret Atwood, Gloria Steinem, Roger Waters, Arundhati Roy, Ken Loach, and Khaled Hosseini

February 13, 2019 – Time4RealPeace, a coalition of Afghan women and civil society groups, released a statement today calling for their inclusion in the current peace deal being negotiated between the United States and the Taliban. [Women have been excluded](#) from the peace talks and have the most to lose if the Taliban regains power. Thirty leading public figures from around the world joined more than 500 people, including over 13 Afghan civil society groups and four international NGO's in signing the statement. Supporters include Margaret Atwood, Gloria Steinem, Roger Waters, Arundhati Roy, Ken Loach, and Khaled Hosseini.

“When the coalition arrived in Afghanistan in 2001, it was on the back of promises made to Afghan women and future generations,” **stated the letter from Time4RealPeace**. “We have been fighting for our rights and representation ever since. We welcome all steps to bring peace to our country, but history has taught us the bloody lesson that you cannot have peace without inclusion. It is time for real peace. It is at this critical moment for the future of our young people, our women and our democracy that we ask for global solidarity, so we can continue to build on our victories.”

The appeal is a part of a wider campaign calling for inclusion of the voices and interests of women, young people, and civil society in the peace negotiations and democratic structures in Afghanistan.

Full text:

Over the last 17 years, we have fought to bring women's voices and interests into Afghanistan's political, social and cultural institutions, against a backdrop of ongoing violence. We are civilians, teachers, doctors, activists, students and artists who have collectively and individually created space to advocate both for ourselves and for peace in our country. Many of our leaders have paid with their lives for this progress. We have built on the sacrifices of Malalai Karkar, Hanifa Safi, Najia Sediqi, Safia Amajan, Farkhunda Malikzada, Islam Bibi and we stand on the shoulders of all the other women who have given their lives in the struggle for the same progress. We, the women of Afghanistan will not go backwards.

The gains made from these hard-won battles are now being threatened by a deal that excludes our interests and voices and ignores the representation we have fought for. It is at this critical moment for the future of our young people, our women and our democracy that we ask for global solidarity, so we can continue to build on our victories.

We write this letter in order to voice our concerns about the current peace deal being negotiated between the United States government and the Afghan Taliban. These negotiations do not include the voices of Afghan women, they do not include the voices of our country's youth, they do not include the voices of civil society nor the democratic structures, government and institutions.

When the coalition arrived in Afghanistan in 2001, it was on the back of promises made to Afghan women and future generations. We have been fighting for our rights and representation ever since. We welcome all steps to bring peace to our country, but history has taught us the bloody lesson that you cannot have peace without inclusion.

As we prepare to defend our rights once more, we ask that this peace process reaffirms and protects our constitutional rights, interests and democracy.

International organizations and public figures

<i>Hanan Al-Shaykh</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Christine Ahn</i>	<u>Activist</u>
<i>Article 19</i>	<u>Human rights organization</u>
<i>Margaret Atwood</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Asieh Amini</i>	<u>Poet</u>
<i>Christine Chinkin</i>	<u>Academic</u>
<i>Scilla Elworthy</i>	<u>Peacebuilder</u>
<i>Eve Ensler</i>	<u>Playwright</u>
<i>Neil Gaiman</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Jodi Ginsberg, Index on Censorship</i>	<u>International NGO</u>
<i>Global Witness</i>	<u>International NGO</u>
<i>Khalid Hosseini</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Mary Kaldor</i>	<u>Academic</u>
<i>Baroness Helena Kennedy QC</i>	<u>Barrister</u>
<i>Wardah Khalid</i>	<u>Activist</u>
<i>Paul Laverty</i>	<u>Screenwriter</u>
<i>Ken Loach</i>	<u>Director</u>
<i>Rebecca O'Brien</i>	<u>Film producer</u>
<i>Susie Orbach</i>	<u>Psychotherapist</u>
<i>Margie Orford</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Caroline Criado Perez OBE</i>	<u>Activist/journalist</u>
<i>Arundhati Roy</i>	<u>Writer/activist</u>
<i>Dame Joan Ruddock</i>	<u>Politician</u>
<i>Kamila Shamsie</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Elif Shafak</i>	<u>Writer/activist</u>
<i>Gillian Slovo</i>	<u>Activist/writer</u>
<i>Gloria Steinem</i>	<u>Writer/feminist</u>
<i>Medeleine Thien</i>	<u>Writer</u>
<i>Jess Tomlin</i>	<u>Activist/organizer</u>
<i>Salil Tripathi</i>	<u>Writer/journalist</u>
<i>Roger Waters</i>	<u>Musician</u>
<i>Cora Weiss</i>	<u>Peace activist</u>
<i>Jody Williams</i>	<u>Nobel Laureate/activist</u>
<i>Women cross DMZ</i>	<u>Peace organization</u>

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