



Joint Statement of House Standing Commission for Human Rights, Civil Society and Women's Affairs, and Women Parliamentary Caucus on Women's Role in Peace Process

Over the past two decades, Afghanistan has proven to be the greatest ally of the United States in the fight against terrorism. The Taliban and other terrorist groups have intensified the war because of the United States' presence in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, today, as the people of Afghanistan look forward to the prospect of peace, the United States and its allies are giving the Taliban the privilege of an unconditional withdrawal and signing an agreement. These decisions will negatively affect the Afghan people and the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANSDF).

Without a doubt, in the last two decades, the people of Afghanistan have made great sacrifices to preserve human rights values and institutionalize the values of democracy and women's rights. The ANSDF has lost nearly 100 people a day, and no other army in the world has sacrificed as much in the fight against terrorism. We bravely stood on the front lines of the war, fought against global terrorism, and made countless sacrifices.

Due to their bitter experiences in the past, Afghan women have the right to question the decisions that will lead the country to a crisis. Therefore, the Human Rights, Civil Society, and Women Affairs Commission and Women Parliamentary Caucus proclaim that:

First: As Afghanistan enters a new chapter in its history, unconditional, irresponsible, and hasty withdrawal of NATO in coming September will cause suffering and hardship to Afghan people, particularly Afghan women.

Second: If war intensifies, the Afghan security forces will need more troops, financial support, and equipment. We call on our international partners to support the people of Afghanistan with financial aid, equipment, and intelligence assistance.

Third: The world shall know that the Taliban are a part of the reality of Afghanistan. However, they do not represent the overall picture of all aspects of the Afghan nation and the history and values of this country.

Fourth: If the Taliban would like the people to believe that they have changed their policies and behavior, then we call on them to practically show human and women's rights in their actions and start with reopening girls' schools in the areas they have under control.

Fifth: Afghan women see the peace process as a process that would put an end to their concerns and worries. This is only practical in a transparent and inclusive process with meaningful and quality participation of women. At such a critical historical juncture, the world must stand with the people of Afghanistan, especially with the women of this country.

Sixth: We call on the United Nations to assist Afghanistan in the fight against global terrorism and uphold democratic values, women's rights, and human rights during the peace process.

Seventh: If the Taliban think that they can take control of Afghanistan through war after the NATO forces leaves, they are wrong. The people of Afghanistan will stand with all their means alongside the defense and security forces against this blatant violation of their values.

With respect,

**House Standing Commission for Human Rights, Civil Society and Women's
Affairs, and Women Parliamentary Caucus**

April 19, 2021

House of Representatives