



Plenary sitting

B9-0525/2022

22.11.2022

MOTION FOR A RESOLUTION

with request for inclusion in the agenda for a debate on cases of breaches of human rights, democracy and the rule of law

pursuant to Rule 144 of the Rules of Procedure

on the human rights situation in Afghanistan especially the deterioration of women's rights and attacks against educational institutions,
(2022/2955(RSP))

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on behalf of the ECR Group

European Parliament resolution on the human rights situation in Afghanistan especially the deterioration of women's rights and attacks against educational institutions, (2022/2955(RSP))

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the UN Security Council resolutions 2210 (2015), 2344 (2017), 2513 (2020) and 2593 (2021),
 - having regard to the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child of 1989,
 - having regard to the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination based on Religion or Belief of 1981,
 - having regard to its previous resolution on Afghanistan,
 - having regard to the outcomes of the joint EU, NATO and G7 meeting on Afghanistan,
 - having regard to the Council conclusions on women, peace and security and HRVP statements on 14 November 2022,
 - having regard to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights of 1948,
 - having regard to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights of 1966,
 - having regard to Rule 132(2) and (4) of the Rules of Procedure,
- A. whereas Afghanistan under the Taliban rule since 1990s ruthlessly suppressed civil society, women's rights and education while prioritizing its role as the main safe haven and operational headquarters of international terrorist organizations;
- B. whereas the Taliban re-established its all-male interim government on 7 September 2021, which consists of 33 Mullahs and 4 people under US sanctions; whereas many of the appointed Taliban members are hard-line veterans during the 1990s regime and the 20-year battle against the international coalition;
- C. whereas Afghanistan ranks last on the Global Women, Peace and Security Index, making it the most dangerous country for women; whereas according to UN Special Procedures, Taliban leaders are attempting to erase women and girls from public life through systematic gender-based discrimination and violence;
- D. whereas the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan is one of the fastest deteriorating crises in the world and has been disproportionately affecting women and girls; whereas the new policies introduced by the Taliban government have greatly affected the ability of women to

make a living, pushing them further into poverty;

- E. whereas since taking over the country on 15 August 2021, the Taliban have closed the Ministry of Women's Affairs and re-established the former Ministry of Vice and Virtue; whereas the Taliban have de facto abolished all previously enforced laws, including those protecting women, and have imposed harsh restrictions on exercising, the right to peaceful assembly, freedom of expression and women's right to work, education and healthcare; whereas the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has been closed since the Taliban takeover;
 - F. whereas according to a new directive, Afghan women are not allowed to travel distances of more than 45 miles (72 km) from their home without the accompaniment of a close male relative; whereas this directive follows a directive issued in November 2021 that banned television stations from broadcasting programmes with female actors;
 - G. whereas peaceful protests for women's rights in Afghanistan are being suppressed with force; whereas human rights defenders have been abducted and no information has been shared regarding their whereabouts despite repeated pleas for their release; whereas those who have been released from custody continue to fear for their lives;
 - H. whereas human rights violations are being reported daily, including arrest, detention, abduction, torture, threats, extortion, extrajudicial killings and attacks on human rights defenders and their family members; whereas there continues to be a complete lack of accountability for such violations; whereas women human rights defenders have been especially impacted; whereas minority groups, such as the Hazara and Christian community, have been specifically targeted;
 - I. whereas since 2002, the European Union and its Member States have collectively been the largest international donor to Afghanistan and its people, providing EUR 17.2 billion in development and humanitarian aid;
 - J. whereas the EU has stepped up its support to the population by launching projects worth over EUR 268,3 million that focus on maintaining education, sustaining livelihoods and protecting public health; whereas these projects are part of the overall EUR 1 billion EU support package announced by the Commission in October 2021, which includes aid for refugees, migrants and internally displaced persons and support for human rights defenders and civil society organisations;
- 1. Recalls that the EU has a solid position regarding any political engagements with the Taliban, guided by thematic benchmarks for engagement based on the principles of adherence to human rights for all and the rule of law; is of the opinion that, since 15 August 2021, there has been only a deterioration in these benchmarks, which cannot justify any de facto recognition of a Taliban government;
 - 2. Is deeply concerned about the humanitarian and human rights crisis that has been unfolding in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover; reiterates its unwavering solidarity with and commitment towards the people of Afghanistan; stresses that the basic rights and freedoms the Afghan people have enjoyed over the past 20 years should be upheld;

3. Stresses the need for humanitarian access to ensure that funds allocated reach those in need; encourages the EU and its Member States to review and adjust current measures accordingly; recalls that humanitarian aid must be neutral, impartial, humane and independent;
4. Deplores the fact that the situation of women and girls in Afghanistan has been steadily deteriorating since the Taliban takeover and recognises that women and girls have faced an increased risk of exploitation, including the risk of being trafficked for the purposes of forced marriage, sex exploitation and forced labour; condemns gender-based violence and discrimination; condemns the Taliban's persistent focus on erasing women and girls from public life and denying their most fundamental rights, including the right to education, work, movement and healthcare;
5. Expresses support to Afghan women protesting in Afghanistan for their freedom; welcomes Afghan women's support and solidarity to the women-led protests in Iran against compulsory veiling after the killing of Masha Amini;
6. Calls on Afghanistan to immediately and unconditionally release all human rights defenders, prisoners of conscience and journalists detained and sentenced merely for exercising their right to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly;
7. Expresses grave concern regarding the appointments in the all-male interim government consisting of 33 Mullahs with many under US and UN sanctions and wanted for terrorist activities; calls for stringent conditions to be imposed on the Taliban before sitting down at any negotiating table that may lead to the recognition of the Taliban interim-government;
8. Condemns in the strongest terms terrorism in all its forms and manifestations, and all terrorist acts;
9. Insists that the Taliban and the Government of the Islamic Republic must fulfil their counterterrorism commitments, including preventing al-Qaida, Da'esh or other terrorist groups and individuals from using Afghan soil to threaten or violate the security of any other country, not hosting members of these group, and preventing them from recruiting, training or fundraising; is deeply concerned that the Taliban is once again providing a safe haven to terrorist groups;
10. Strongly condemns the continued violence in Afghanistan for which the Taliban is largely responsible and demands that all parties take immediate and necessary steps to reduce violence, including against protestors, and avoid civilian casualties;
11. Expresses solidarity with the women and human rights defenders protesting around Afghanistan against the Taliban takeover of the country and who want to live in a free, stable, peaceful and diverse society; supports the calls of Afghan civil society, to hold the de facto Afghan authorities accountable for previous crimes and to not forget their atrocities;
12. Expresses deep concern about reports of violence against women, protestors and journalists; reminds the Taliban that they must uphold human rights, including those of minorities, notably Hazaras and Christians, the freedom of expression, association and assembly; calls on the EU and its Member States to create mechanisms that will ensure accountability of those committed crimes.

13. Condemns the growing reports of killings, harassment and intimidation of Hazaras, Christians and other minorities and that the Christian and Hazara communities are now dissolving due to persecution;
14. Calls on Afghanistan to cease and desist all attacks on a free and open press and to ensure journalists are offered a safe environment to conduct their reporting free from intimidation, harassment or the threat of violence in accordance with the International Convention on the Safety and Independence of Journalists and other Media Professionals; and calls on the international community, NGOs and IT companies to develop special tools and outlets for safe reporting and receipt of information dedicated to Afghanistan;
15. Believes that in order to attain national security, stability and prosperity, the Afghan government needs to represent and reflect the diverse ethnic and cultural background of the country; recalls that the long-term development of Afghanistan will depend on accountability, good governance, the sustainable provision of human security, including the reduction of poverty and the creation of job opportunities, access to social and health services, education, and the protection of fundamental freedoms and human rights;
16. Encourages Member States to strengthen ties with and provide support to neighbouring countries hosting Afghan migrants to ensure that proper provision of resources, humane treatment and education are provided;
17. Condemns irreparable damages of the cultural sites made by the Taliban and its affiliates and remains cautious that the instability will lead to an increase of international smuggling and theft of cultural heritage that could be used to finance enhanced activity by terror organisations in the region; urges that a digitization of Afghan cultural artefacts take place in Europe to support detection of smuggled goods and a temporary comprehensive ban against the import of cultural goods from Afghanistan be implemented to deprive the Taliban and its affiliates of the potential to profit from cultural smuggling;
18. Urges Member States to preserve and share whatever intelligence was gained through their military and law enforcement presence in Afghanistan with a particular emphasis on the biometric data that is critical in assisting Member States and third countries in identifying any returning Foreign Fighters;
19. Calls on the international community, primarily the UN, European Council, G7 and G20 to employ all diplomatic, political or other appropriate means, including targeted sanctions on the Taliban currently in positions of power, to promote and protect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of women and other persons belonging to religious minorities;
20. Considers that Issue of Afghanistan is a case where not only EU but international community should act. Creating broadest effort possible and prepare a joint strategy for Afghanistan, taking multilateral approach with EU partners.
21. Calls on the European Commission to appoint a new Special Envoy for the Promotion and Protection of Freedom of Religion or Belief outside the EU, without delay and to equip the position with adequate staff and funding;

22. Calls upon the United Nations Human Rights Council to establish without delay a dedicated mechanism tasked with monitoring the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, focusing particularly on the human rights of women and persons belonging to [ethnic and] religious and belief minorities;
23. Calls on the European External Action Service to engage in a transparent and thorough monitoring of the human rights situation in Afghanistan;
24. Encourages enhanced security and intelligence cooperation with Afghanistan's neighbouring countries in Central Asia to ensure that the Taliban is denied the operational capability to recruit additional personnel or mount any offensive against its neighbours;
25. Encourages enhanced collaboration with Europol in supporting Member States national authorities via: security checks of people coming from Afghanistan, facilitation of intelligence sharing with third countries, deployment of guest officers, strengthening cooperation with neighbouring countries in Central Asia and monitoring of criminal content online related to Afghanistan via Europol's internet referral unit;
26. Urges the EU and Member States to increase efforts to cooperate with the US and NATO allies to combat drug trafficking, money laundering, terrorist financing and human smuggling in the region;
27. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the European External Action Service, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the governments and parliaments of the Member States, the Members of the Afghan National Assembly and the Taliban interim-government of Afghanistan.