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Summary of the Report on Violence Against Women

The causes, context, and situation of violence against women in Afghanistan

Fiscal year 1396

Summary of the findings of this report;

Violence against women is one of the most serious human rights challenges in Afghanistan. Violence is practiced in various forms against women; the most common of which are physical, sexual, economic, verbal and psychological violence, and violence that is connected to unacceptable custom and tradition.

Cases of violence in fiscal year 1396

The present report shows that during fiscal year, 1396, 4,340 cases of violence against women have been registered, involving 2,286 people. So this year, 1396 more than 2,286 women in Afghanistan suffered from at least one type of violence against women. But in fiscal year 1395, about 2,046 cases of violence against women were recorded in the AIHRC's database. The statistics show that the number of complainants and victims of violence, referring to relevant authorities is rising.

The number of registered cases of violence against women increased by 11.7% in fiscal year 1396 compared to fiscal year 1395

➤ **Type of violence**

Of the total violence against women, 4,340 cases registered in fiscal year 1396, 1,420 cases (32.7%), relates to physical violence, 228 cases (5.3%), to sexual violence, 1317 cases (30.3%), to verbal and psychological violence, 749 cases (17.3%), to economic violence, and 626 cases (14.4%) relate to other types of violence against women, which largely relates to unacceptable customs and traditions.

➤ **Physical violence;**

Physical violence takes place in various forms. In many cases, these violent acts are very severe and often result in the murder of women. Of the 1,420 cases of physical violence, 1,213 of them include beating and battering, and this makes up 27.9% of the physical violence against women, which takes the form of acute and merciless violence. About 24 of these cases are burning. In 40 cases recorded in the AIHRC's database women were killed through male violence. 85 cases of injuries. 30 cases of forced labor have been reported. In 5 other cases, the victim's limb was cut, and 23 cases include other types of violence.

➤ **Killing of Women**

One of the shocking types of physical violence that leads to the murder of women is honor killings, which take place based on dignity and honor justifications. In the meantime, the AIHRC has documented approximately 277 cases of female murder, of which there were personal complements only in 40 cases registered in the AIHRC's databank. The rest of the cases of women's murder have been documented by the AIHRC, the complainants have not referred to the AIHRC, this represents an increase of 8% compared to last year, because last year 234 cases of women's murder were recorded in the same period of time. Most of these cases have occurred in the northern, southern and eastern parts of Afghanistan. Of the total of 277 murder cases, 136 are honor killing cases. Of the total number of cases mentioned above, the perpetrators of 142 cases of women's murder are fugitive perpetrators.

➤ **Extrajudicial killing**

During this period of time, the AIHRC has documented eight extrajudicial courts in the country that had led to the killing of 12 people (men and women), and beating and injury of 3 people (one man and two women). It should be noted that the perpetrators of all the cases of extrajudicial trial, except some people arrested in the ChaaAab of Takhar Province, are fugitives. These cases have occurred in the Kohestan area of Herat, Badghis, Faryab and Takhar provinces.

➤ **Sexual violence**

Sexual violence is one of the most serious problems of women and a taboo issue in Afghan society traditions, thus people are attempting to conceal sexual violence. However, in the fiscal year 1396, approximately 228 cases of sexual violence were recorded in the

AIHRC's database, accounting for 5.3% of all cases of violence against women. Of the total statistics on sexual violence, about 40 cases of rape, 41 cases of sexual harassment, 6 cases of forced pornography, 27 forced marriages, 34 forced prostitutions, 26 cases of forced sodomy, 35 cases of husband relationship with others, 4 forced pregnancies, 9 abortions, and 6 other cases were reported.

➤ **Verbal violence**

Linguistic and verbal violence is also one of the prevalent cases of violence against women, which is rarely considered as violence. This kind of violence is usually occurring within the family and in public places in the form of street harassment.

In fiscal year 1396, about 1,317 linguistic and verbal violence were recorded in the AIHRC's database, accounting for 30.3% of all cases of violence against women. Of the total statistics on linguistic and verbal violence, approximately 127 cases of accusation, 98 cases of forced isolation, 99 cases of divorce and ousting from home, 223 cases of threat with murder, 6 cases of threat due to deformity, 25 cases of humiliation due to lack of children, 5 cases of insults due to lack of male children, 714 cases of insult, humiliation and intimidation, and, 20 other cases were reported.

➤ **Economical violence**

Economic violence is another type of violence against women. This violence also occurs in different ways.

In fiscal year 1396, approximately 749 cases of economic violence were recorded in the AIHRC's database, accounting for 17.3% of all cases of violence against women. Of the total economic violence statistics, about 576 cases relate to non-payment of alimony, 20 cases of denial of the right to work, 53 cases of prevention of inheritance rights, 55 cases of prevention of private property, 26 cases of non-payment of dowry, 19 other cases have been reported.

➤ **Other cases of violence against women**

AIHRC investigations show that violence against women is not limited to the above-mentioned violence. Based on the AIHRC's database, in addition to the previous categories of violence against women, approximately 626 other cases, accounting for 14.4% of all cases of violence against women, have been included in the AIHRC's database. Out of the total of 749 cases, 79 cases related to denial of the right to choose spouses, 100 cases related to forced engagement, 88 cases were prohibition of visiting relatives, 46 cases were polygamy of husbands, 45 cases were denial of the right to education, 37 cases were denial of access to health services, 10 cases of selling and buying of women under the pretext of marriage, 14 cases of negation of relationship, 7 cases of Bad, 15 cases of denial of civil and political rights, 6 cases of drug addiction, 7 cases related to trafficking and 174 cases related to category of other cases.

➤ □ **The Consequences of Violence Against Women;**

Violence against women leads to serious social, cultural and economic consequences for Afghan women. The AIHRC's fiscal year 1396 report shows that violence against women has affected women and has led to the following problems: 24.1% mental and

psychological problems, 35.5% unknown destiny, 0.4% attempts for self-immolation, 2.0%, attempt for suicide 0.3% school dropout, 8.8% left home, 0.3% left duty, 7.7% separation, 4.6% injury, 0.2% pregnancy due to rape, 0.3% self-immolation, 0.5% suicide, 0.1% prostitution, 0.8% % fracture of body organs, 3.4% flee from home, 0.2% trafficking victims, 0.16% trafficking and murder of the victim, in two cases sexually transmitted diseases, 0.3% disability, 9.1%, other.

➤ **Place of violence;**

Violence against women, however, is a social phenomenon with deep root in the culture and traditions of society. But AIHRC's review shows that violence against women within families is one of the most common forms of violence. Out of the statistics of fiscal year 1396, 4,118 cases, accounting for 94% of all cases of violence against women, occurred in the home. **This figure indicates that the home environment is the most insecure place for women in Afghanistan.** Of the remaining cases, 79 were in the street or on the roads, 29 cases in the workplace, in the offices or in the hospitals, 16 cases in the training center, school or university, 10 cases in the detention facility or in the prison. 34 other cases are not specified

➤ **The gender of the perpetrators of violence;**

AIHRC investigations show that most cases of violence against women are committed by men. But in many cases, women also commit violence against women. Female violence against women also has its root in the culture and traditions of society. The AIHRC's database shows that in fiscal year 1396, about 90.3% of the violence against women has been committed by men (61% were husbands). In 4.3%, of the incidences women have been responsible for violence against women, and 5.4% relates to unknown perpetrators.

➤ **Causes and factors of violence against women;**

Violence against women occurs due to several factors. The most important factors of violence against women are the existence of unacceptable customs and tradition, the lack of security and weakness in the rule of the law in the districts and provinces, the lack of serious dealing with perpetrators and the continued culture of impunity, corruption and abuse of duty, the involvement of influential individuals in the handling of cases; the limit access of women to justice (courts, prosecutors' offices, women's detention centers and lawyers); the presence of illegal arms and weapons with irresponsible armed individuals and groups; the lack of adequate support for victims of violence against women; illiteracy; and a low level of public awareness; poverty and unemployment; increased drug addiction.

➤ **Actions of the AIHRC on Violence against Women:**

In this report the AIHRC's performances regarding the cases of violence against women are investigated on the basis of the cases and the number of victims of violence, not on the basis of violence statistics. Thus of the 2,286 cases involving 4340 incidences of violence against women, 361 cases were resolved through mediation, of which 153 were introduced to safe shelters. In 94 cases, the complainant withdrew and gave up to continue, 194 cases were referred to the police, 168 cases were referred to the Attorney Office, 545 cases were referred to the courts, 611 cases were submitted to legal aid centers to receive legal advices in the centers and provinces of the country; 54 cases were presented to health centers; 106 very common cases were referred to the elderly people.

➤ **The implementation of justice and judicial institutions in relation to cases of violence against women;**

Of the 194 cases referred to the police, 136 cases were addressed and handed over to the prosecution office. The perpetrators of 58 cases are fugitive, that are under police prosecution.

Out of 168 cases handed over to the Special Prosecution Office for Combating Violence Against Women, 49 of these cases were resolved through the mediation. 42 cases were handed over to the courts. In 32 cases, due to the provision of the necessary documents by the defendant were maintained, and in 31 cases, the parties withdrew the lawsuit.

545 cases were handed over to the Afghan courts. About which there is a minimum miscellaneous information available. The reporting procedures of the courts are such that, a full report of the proceedings of the courts related to the violence against women cases will be received at the end of the Islamic-Lunar Year, almost at the beginning of the month of Hamal of the new year,

➤ **Recommendations**

- Raising the level of knowledge and public opinion about the social and individual rights and privileges of women through the development of educational and awareness raising programs.
- Creating an income generating opportunities for women to eliminate women's economic dependence on men.
- Strengthening the rule of law and combating the culture of impunity that has contributed to the continuation of violence against women in the country.
- Strengthening the special Prosecution Office for combatting violence, and increasing the number of qualified and expert personnel in this organ.
- Strengthening and expanding the Court of Justice for handling the cases of violence against women and expanding of such organs in remote provinces of the country;
- Strengthen the presence of women in the security ranks of the country, and raise the level of knowledge and awareness of the police and the security forces.
- Creating facilities for women's access to justice in the distant provinces in order to have women victims of violence protected by law;
- Providing facilities for registration of marriage and divorce throughout the country and monitoring the precise implementation of it;
- Creating a human culture, and elimination of culture of violence from the family and social life of people in the country.