

Flygtningenævnets baggrundsmateriale

| | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Bilagsnr.: | 1706 |
| Land: | Afghanistan |
| Kilde: | UN General Assembly |
| Titel: | Eightieth session: Situation of human rights in Afghanistan - Note by the Secretary-General |
| Udgivet: | 8. oktober 2025 |
| Optaget på baggrundsmaterialet: | 21. januar 2026 |



General Assembly

Distr.: General
8 October 2025

Original: English

Eightieth session

Agenda item 71 (c)

**Promotion and protection of human rights: human rights
situations and reports of special rapporteurs and representatives**

Situation of human rights in Afghanistan

Note by the Secretary-General*

The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the General Assembly the report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett, in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution [57/3](#).

* The present report was submitted for processing after the deadline so as to include the most recent information.



Report of the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, Richard Bennett

Summary

The present report, submitted by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, covers primarily the period from January through August 2025.

The report contains a review of the deteriorating human rights situation, caused mainly by the Taliban's discriminatory and repressive policies and practices, with a focus on gender persecution, public punishments, the human rights impact of funding cuts and the rights of returnees.

I. Introduction

1. The human rights situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate, marked by intensified gender persecution, a surge in corporal punishment, shrinking space for civil society and media, ongoing retaliation against officials of the former Islamic Republic, especially security forces and justice officials, and the mass forced return of Afghans from neighbouring countries. At the same time, a sharp decline in international funding is having a severe impact on humanitarian operations and hindering the work of non-governmental organizations (NGOs), including those focused on human rights. Meanwhile, grinding poverty, high unemployment, discrimination against ethnic and religious minorities, and ideologically framed education risk creating a breeding ground for extremism and future instability.

2. Notwithstanding these alarming trends, some Member States appear to be edging towards *de facto*, if not *de jure*, recognition of the Taliban. The Special Rapporteur strongly reiterates that no such normalization should occur without significant, demonstrable and independently verified improvements in the human rights situation.

3. Turning a blind eye to widespread abuses, in particular the systematic discrimination, oppression and exclusion of women and girls, not only emboldens the Taliban, but also sets a dangerous precedent globally. Failure to challenge gender-based persecution in Afghanistan risks accelerating the worldwide rollback of women's rights and gender equality. It also significantly undermines the women and peace and security agenda.

4. Nevertheless, the people of Afghanistan continue to courageously push back against repression by defending civic space, documenting human rights violations, advocating for accountability, seeking education and amplifying marginalized voices. However, owing to tightening restrictions and substantial funding cuts, these efforts are increasingly under threat, and civil society, which is already under severe strain, stands on the brink of collapse.

5. Urgent support is essential not only for the immediate needs of Afghanistan's people, but also for the country's long-term future. This requires sustained humanitarian aid alongside increased backing for women and girls, displaced communities, at-risk refugees, grassroots and hybrid media and civil society organizations, including women-led organizations and human rights defenders. Ultimately, it is the people of Afghanistan, especially women, young people and a civil society of diverse ethnic, religious, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds, who hold the key to shaping their nation's path forward. Their meaningful inclusion must be at the heart of all efforts to rebuild and transform Afghanistan.

II. Working methods

6. The present report builds on previous reports submitted to the Human Rights Council and the General Assembly.

7. Throughout the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur continued to engage with Afghans through in-person and virtual interactions with diverse stakeholders inside and outside of the country, including women, human rights defenders, members of various ethnic and religious groups, education professionals, journalists and media workers. He travelled to countries in Asia, Europe and North America to meet Afghan stakeholders, including members of civil society, academics and government officials. He extends his gratitude to the many Afghans who met him or otherwise

shared information with his office, including personal accounts of human rights violations.

8. During the reporting period, the Special Rapporteur's work was affected severely by the United Nations liquidity crisis.

9. For the present report, the Special Rapporteur issued a call for input on the human rights impact of funding cuts to organizations working in or on Afghanistan and received 16 submissions from Afghan and international NGOs and United Nations entities.

10. The Special Rapporteur also continued to invite the de facto authorities to share their comments on his human rights reporting and wrote to the de facto authorities requesting information for the present report. He also shared an advanced copy for factual comments. At the time of writing, no input had been received.

III. Key areas of focus

A. Situation of women and girls

11. During the reporting period, there was no reprieve from the Taliban's increasingly entrenched, institutionalized system of gender-based discrimination, oppression and domination of women and girls. All the wide-ranging restrictions imposed on women and girls that the Special Rapporteur has previously reported remain in effect, including severe deprivations of their rights to freedom of movement, education, health, work, freedoms of expression and association, and participation in public life. In June 2025, the Committee on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women reviewed the situation in Afghanistan and described it as "one of the most severe reversals of women's human rights ever recorded" (CEDAW/C/AFG/CO/4, para. 5).

12. Of particular concern is the continuing ban on education for girls and women beyond grade six, including secondary and tertiary education and other professional training. According to the United Nations Children's Fund, the ban has affected 2.2 million Afghan girls and women.¹ Clandestine online and underground schools remain an important lifeline; however, such initiatives are being undermined by cuts to international funding. The Special Rapporteur is also alarmed by reports that the de facto authorities plan to restrict access to madrasa education for women and girls. In many regions, madrasas are the only available option for education and, in addition to providing religious education, enable them to acquire other skills and meet and socialize with one other.

13. Women also continue to be severely restricted in their ability to work and, even where exemptions are granted, female staff are subject to strict gender-based segregation and restrictions, including severe and tightening restrictions on their freedom movement. In some provinces, women employees are required to obtain an official document identifying an approved *mahram*; those without the card risk being denied access to their workplace.

14. There are ongoing and disturbing reports of threats and intimidation towards women who continue to work, notwithstanding an adherence to Taliban-imposed requirements. This includes women national staff of the United Nations, dozens of whom were subjected to death threats by unknown individuals in May 2025. Four months later, early in September 2025, the de facto authorities imposed restrictions

¹ See www.unicef.org/press-releases/new-school-year-starts-afghanistan-almost-400000-more-girls-deprived-their-right.

preventing all United Nations women national staff from entering United Nations premises in Kabul and field offices, as well as attempting to restrict them from travelling to field locations, in violation of international law.

15. The Taliban has also intensified implementation of the August 2024 so-called law on the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. This includes strict enforcement of mandatory hijab and *mahram* requirements and the segregation of women and men in public spaces through inspections of shops, markets, health clinics and public transportation. De facto officials regularly mete out punishments for non-compliance with the law, including verbal reprimands, public humiliation, fines and, at times, physical violence. In July 2025, the de facto authorities in Kabul arrested dozens of women and girls deemed to be wearing “improper” hijabs.

16. De facto officials have also issued instructions to shopkeepers, drivers and others not to allow access or provide services to women without a *mahram*. In some instances, women deemed to be violating Taliban-imposed dress codes were prevented from gaining access to public offices or services, including health centres. In August 2025, de facto officials intensified their crackdown on beauty salons for women that were operating underground after being banned in 2023. The increasing involvement of relatives, both men and women, in enforcing compliance by their female relatives reflects both a climate of fear and the entrenching of discriminatory and oppressive norms.

Access to justice

17. Women and girls in Afghanistan continue to face severe barriers in gaining access to justice. As the Special Rapporteur has reported in detail, since retaking power, the Taliban has uprooted the legal and judicial system, abolishing laws and replacing or repurposing institutions to align with its strict ideological and misogynistic governance model (see [A/HRC/59/25](#)). This includes the suspension of national legislation promulgated by earlier governments, the imposition of discriminatory laws, decrees and severe punishments, and the redefinition and takeover of judicial roles and law enforcement agencies.

18. While these changes affect the entire population, the consequences for women and girls are especially severe. Women judges, prosecutors and lawyers have been removed from the Taliban-controlled justice system, while women officials in the police and other institutions are few, reducing safe channels to report abuse or to seek redress. The situation has been exacerbated by the Taliban’s closure of shelters for survivors of gender-based violence. The Special Rapporteur is especially concerned about widespread underreporting of violence and discrimination against women and girls as a direct consequence.

19. Women who engage with the Taliban courts often encounter a hostile environment. Complaints, in particular those concerning divorce, child custody or sexual and gender-based violence, are frequently dismissed or redirected to mediation. When cases proceed, courts seldom rule in women’s favour.

20. Many women and girls have increasingly turned to alternate dispute resolution mechanisms to resolve disputes, in particular in cases relating to domestic and intimate partner violence. While these may offer faster outcomes and the perception of greater cultural legitimacy, they also pose serious risks to the rights of women and girls because most are dominated by men. Decisions often reflect patriarchal norms and favour male interests. Furthermore, they often lack transparency, procedural fairness and independent oversight.

21. Reports of torture and ill-treatment of women detainees continue, including allegations of sexual violence. Conditions in detention are reported to be poor, with

overcrowding and inadequate access to medical care and menstrual hygiene. After women are released from detention, services to support reintegration are severely limited. Former women detainees face social stigma and rejection by their families and report continued harassment and intimidation, including by the Taliban.

22. Protection for women and girls has become increasingly challenging as funding and pathways to asylum have reduced significantly, which, combined with the Taliban's closure of shelters and safe houses, results in severe negative physical and psychological impacts.

Women's political participation

23. Women's participation in public life, as well as in peace, security, governance and decision-making processes, remains virtually non-existent inside Afghanistan. The Taliban continues to exclude women from holding public office, and women are also excluded from national and local governance structures. However, some Afghan women have participated in the technical working groups on counter-narcotics and the private sector established under the United Nations-facilitated Doha process. Restrictions on women's right to work and hold leadership roles within NGOs is further erasing them from public life and silencing their voices in important policy discussions. This further deepens gender inequality and undermines efforts to promote the women and peace and security agenda in Afghanistan.

24. Notwithstanding their exclusion, Afghan women human rights defenders both inside the country and in exile continue to advocate internationally for the restoration of their rights and the importance of diverse Afghan voices in shaping Afghanistan's future. As one women's rights activist declaimed, "What we want is to have a voice; instead, others are making decisions for us."

25. The Special Rapporteur reiterates the critical need to ensure the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of Afghan women and girls, in all their diversity and in all spheres of life, and stresses that their inclusion is essential to support the humanitarian response, conflict resolution initiatives and efforts towards inclusive governance.

B. Public executions, corporal punishment and other torture and ill-treatment

26. There was a worrying increase in judicially sanctioned public executions and an alarming surge in corporal punishments during the first eight months of 2025. On 11 April 2025, the de facto authorities publicly executed four men in sport stadiums in Badghis, Farah and Nimroz Provinces, the highest number of public executions to be carried out in a single day since the Taliban retook power. The men had each been convicted of murder and, as is the practice for cases involving *qisas* crimes, which carry the death penalty, their punishments had been approved by the Taliban leader. The men were each shot by relatives of the victims. At least 10 people, all men, have been publicly executed since August 2021. The Special Rapporteur is also concerned about the scores of death sentences, including some that refer to stoning, that were reportedly issued by the de facto courts and have not been carried out yet.

27. Court-sanctioned corporal punishment, consisting of public flogging, has surged in 2025. Typical punishments constitute dozens of lashes that are accompanied by terms of imprisonment. An analysis of data from the de facto Supreme Court indicates that, between 1 January and 31 August, at least 681 people (552 men and 129 women) were subjected to corporal punishment, more than double the figure for the same period in the previous year. Punishments were reported in 31 of Afghanistan's

34 provinces, with the highest instances in Kabul, Khost and Sar-e-Pul Provinces. The lack of age-disaggregated data means that it is unclear how many children are among those punished; however, the Special Rapporteur has confirmed that punishments against both girls and boys have occurred since the Taliban retook power. These punishments amount to torture and other ill-treatment, which are prohibited under international law, including in international treaties to which Afghanistan is a State Party. The Special Rapporteur is also concerned about consistent reports of floggings meted out by de facto officials that are not included in the published de facto Supreme Court data.

28. The Taliban uses corporal punishment as a tool of social control and to enforce its strict and repressive ideology. While all Afghans can face such punishments, the impact varies with the gender of the victim. The overwhelming majority of those punished (81 per cent) are male, punished for criminal offences such as theft, drug-related offences, selling alcohol and murder, in addition to undefined “immoral actions”. Women and girls, meanwhile, are punished mostly for so-called moral crimes such as adultery and running away from home, while lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other gender-diverse (LGBTQ+) persons are punished for same-sex relationships, which remain criminalized under Taliban rule.

29. Public executions and floggings are often carried out in places such as town squares, stadiums and marketplaces. In many cases, the de facto authorities force local residents, mostly men and boys, to attend and witness the punishments being inflicted. These punitive practices serve not only as retribution, but also as part of a deliberate strategy to instil fear and reinforce Taliban dominance. However, officials prohibit filming and routinely confiscate mobile phones, ensuring that no visual evidence can be publicly broadcast, thus preventing wider public and international scrutiny.

30. The de facto Supreme Court has defended executions and corporal punishment as compliant with sharia. No evidence is provided to confirm that trials meet basic standards of due process. In the absence of an independent judiciary, a functioning legal system and a free press, victims of such punishments and their families are left with little recourse.

31. The Taliban regularly makes public announcements about the number of people executed or flogged; this serves as a stark reminder of its disregard for international human rights law and offers a clear indication of violations that should be subject to international investigation and prosecution.

32. Torture and ill-treatment remain widespread, in particular in Taliban-run detention facilities such as those under the control of the de facto General Directorate of Intelligence and the de facto police. The Special Rapporteur continues to record and receive credible information about severe beatings, including with cables, pipes and rifle butts, suffocation with plastic bags, simulated drowning, electric shocks, sexual violence, stress positions, mock executions and sleep deprivation.² He is especially concerned about reports of deaths in custody.

33. Detainees include former government employees and members of the security forces, journalists and civil society activists, including women. They are frequently arrested without warrants, denied access to lawyers or contact with family members and subjected to extended periods of incommunicado detention.

² See, for example, <https://rawadari.org/reports/torture-and-ill-treatment-the-state-of-prisons-in-taliban-controlled-afghanistan/>; and www.omct.org/en/resources/reports/afghanistan-first-hand-accounts-expose-torture-by-taliban-intelligence-services.

C. Civil society organizations and civic space

34. Civil society and NGOs have long played a crucial role in Afghanistan. Their work extends far beyond humanitarian assistance to delivering education, promoting human rights and gender equality, advancing economic empowerment and providing legal advice and services, including to at-risk and marginalized communities. As the Special Rapporteur has noted repeatedly, Taliban-imposed restrictions and a sharp decline in international aid and assistance to Afghanistan has forced civil society organizations to operate in an increasingly restrictive environment. He also notes with concern that none of the multi-billion-dollar frozen funds that are preserved by States “for the benefit of the Afghan people” have been disbursed to that end.

35. In 2025, however, significant international funding cuts, in particular by the United States of America and European States, have had a severe impact on the capacity of civil society, national and international NGOs and even United Nations agencies to continue their work. A June 2025 survey of organizations operating inside Afghanistan found that 85 per cent of 137 respondents reported projects being affected by funding cuts.³ A women-led organization that submitted information to the Special Rapporteur reported having lost 60 per cent of its core funding since mid-2025, resulting in the termination of one third of its staff. This had severely undermined its work in gender-based violence response, child protection and livelihood development. Information received indicates that effects are especially felt by smaller, grassroots organizations, which often lack core funding and access to diverse funding sources.

36. Funding cuts have, in particular, affected provision of humanitarian aid and assistance. In 2025, some 22.9 million Afghans were estimated to need vital humanitarian relief, a figure that predates the mass expulsion of Afghans from neighbouring countries and the 31 August earthquake in eastern Afghanistan that killed and injured thousands and left tens of thousands more in need of assistance, especially in remote and hard-to-reach areas. As at the end of August 2025, the humanitarian response plan was just 29 per cent funded. Consequently, the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs reports severe constraints on the humanitarian response, including, for example, the closure of 420 health facilities affecting some 3 million people and the closure of 300 nutrition sites affecting some 80,000 acutely malnourished children and mothers.⁴

37. The Special Rapporteur received information from multiple organizations experiencing severe funding cuts, many of which are women-led. Those organizations work in protection, especially of human rights defenders and survivors of gender-based violence, legal assistance, education, healthcare, including mental health and psychosocial assistance, mine clearance and risk reduction, media and the arts. In response to the cuts, many organizations reported being forced to suspend or terminate key projects, while others have had to halt plans for expansion. Organizations also reported being forced to lay off staff, reduce salaries or ask employees to work without pay and close offices. All expressed concern about the long-term sustainability of their work.

38. The absence of funding has also weakened the ability of organizations to monitor, report and respond to human rights violations at a time when oversight is urgently needed. Media organizations, including hybrid outlets and those operating in exile, reported significant impacts on their ability to document and report on human rights violations. “Financial limitations are hindering our ability to maintain

³ See <https://reliefweb.int/node/4165051>.

⁴ See www.unocha.org/publications/report/afghanistan/afghanistan-humanitarian-update-may-2025.

comprehensive data collection, produce in-depth reports and sustain international advocacy efforts”, a media-focused organization told the Special Rapporteur. Organizations and initiatives working in the cultural and artistic fields also reported their operations being severely undermined, with one warning of the long-term impacts: “Our brushes have been forcibly silenced. Without international support, we risk losing not only our organization, but a vision of Afghanistan rooted in creativity, justice and dignity”.

39. Funding cuts have also severely undermined organizational security measures, such as safe offices, transportation and emergency protocols, in particular for women-led and human rights-focused organizations. These groups already faced heightened risks after the Taliban retook power, and, without sufficient protection resources, staff and service recipients, especially women, are exposed to further risks of threats and harassment. Several organizations reported that a lack of funding and security capacity had forced them to withdraw completely from districts where those security measures were needed, further limiting support for already at-risk and vulnerable communities.

40. The dire situation notwithstanding, Afghan organizations are demonstrating notable resilience by adopting innovative strategies to sustain their work. The Special Rapporteur heard from organizations in Kabul, Kandahar and in exile about efforts such as strengthened coordination with local and traditional leaders to implement low-cost community initiatives that utilized local resources, co-locating projects, conducting regular prioritization exercises and making the transition to remote or hybrid models, where feasible. They are also actively seeking smaller grants to maintain operations; however, these often create additional bureaucratic and financial burdens. As one organization operating in southern Afghanistan explained, “Smaller grants are accompanied by complex compliance requirements, with little or no support for core costs or institutional capacity-building”.

41. While these adaptive approaches demonstrate the commitment of Afghan civil society to continuing to serve their communities, they are not a sustainable long-term solution. The reduction and suspension of funding have resulted in widespread institutional paralysis, forcing many civil society organizations, advocacy groups and professional associations to cease activities altogether. In the short term, at-risk and vulnerable populations are being left without critical services and support. In the longer term, there is a serious risk of civil society collapsing entirely, with profound and long-lasting consequences for human rights.

Restrictions on press freedom and freedom of expression

42. Press freedom is increasingly restricted, with censorship imposed and journalists and media workers facing ongoing risks, including threats, intimidation and harassment, as well as arbitrary arrest and detention. Women journalists face additional challenges and risks stemming from Taliban restrictions on their right to work and freedom of movement.

43. In February 2025, the de facto authorities announced a ban on the broadcast of political programmes by domestic media organizations. Live political programmes, such as current affairs talk shows, had already been banned in September 2024, and media outlets were required to air pre-recorded shows with pre-approved content and participants. While a new policy announced by the de facto Ministry of Information and Culture in late June 2025 lifted the February ban, it imposed a series of strict requirements on content. An oversight committee was established to approve all political media content before publication, including that on digital platforms, to ensure that programmes aligned with Taliban principles and policies, supported “national unity” and avoided “inflammatory” content. Political commentators are

required to obtain a special identification card issued by the de facto Ministry after being vetted and are prohibited from expressing views that contradict Taliban policies. In words that echoed those of other media workers in the country, a male journalist from southern Afghanistan told the Special Rapporteur, “I feel I am no longer a voice for the people, but a tool of the regime”.

44. Also in June 2025, the Taliban leader approved a law on the regulation of poetry gatherings. The law requires the pre-approval of content and speakers and prohibits poems containing criticism of Taliban policies and descriptions of romantic love, immoral desires and “inappropriate” emotions.

45. The Taliban has also continued to incrementally implement the ban on images of living beings, which was codified in the so-called law on the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. Journalists report informal warnings, and media outlets are facing increasing pressure to avoid broadcasting or publishing such images. The ban has been actively enforced in at least 20 provinces; television stations in affected areas have responded by switching to audio-only broadcasts or broadcasting static images.

D. Returnees

46. The Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) reported the return of more than 2.4 million Afghans in the first eight months of 2025. The vast majority were deported, forced or pressured to return, notwithstanding repeated warnings by United Nations experts, UNHCR, which has a long-standing non-return advisory, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and human rights and humanitarian organizations, all of which raised serious concerns about violations of the principle of non-refoulement. Among those forcibly returned were many people who had not set foot in Afghanistan for decades and some who had never previously lived in the country.

47. The surge in returns is attributable primarily to mass expulsions from the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan due to changes in their migration policies, fuelled in part by unfounded security allegations against Afghans. According to UNHCR data, the Islamic Republic of Iran returned more than 1.9 million Afghans during the reporting period, while Pakistan returned more than 440,000. Of the returnees from the Islamic Republic of Iran, the vast majority were families, including many women-headed households. In Pakistan, some 1.4 million Afghan holders of proof of registration cards are also at risk of repatriation, following a decision on 31 July 2025 by the host Government to expand implementation of the 2023 illegal foreigners repatriation plan. These cardholders have long been recognized as refugees; however, their cards expired on 30 June 2025 and will no longer be extended, notwithstanding pleas from humanitarian and human rights organizations.

48. At the same time, other Member States have also deported or involuntarily returned Afghans, albeit in far smaller numbers. Other Member States that host significant numbers of Afghans are also reportedly exploring potential deportations or returns.

49. The Special Rapporteur recognizes that the Islamic Republic of Iran and Pakistan have hosted millions of Afghans for decades with limited international support; however, he underlines that countries have an obligation under international human rights and refugee law not to return anyone to a place where they have well-founded fears of persecution or face risk of irreparable harm.

50. Many Afghan refugees have expressed grave concern to the Special Rapporteur about possible deportations. Some detailed their legitimate fears of persecution upon

return, including women and girls, human rights defenders, journalists, former judges and prosecutors, members of the former Government and security forces, LGBTQ+ persons and members of religious and ethnic minorities. Parents frequently referred to gender-based persecution as hindering a viable future for their daughters.

51. Afghan refugees also reported concerns about their human rights situation in host countries, including the absence of procedural safeguards in deportation proceedings, xenophobic threats and violence and the difficulty in obtaining legal status, notwithstanding clear protection needs. The loss of legal status, especially in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan and Türkiye, has forced many into irregular situations, exacerbating their vulnerability to gender-based violence, human trafficking, forced and bonded labour, corruption, extortion, and arbitrary arrest, detention and deportation.

52. The high volume of returnees also makes it harder for humanitarian agencies and the de facto authorities to provide for the basic needs of all Afghans, a situation exacerbated by severe funding cuts. Resources for food, healthcare, education and housing are critically overstretched. The Special Rapporteur is particularly concerned about the unmet needs of unaccompanied and separated children, women heads of household and those travelling without a *mahram*, persons with disabilities, older persons, LGBTQ+ persons and those lacking documentation. The Special Rapporteur reiterates the need for States to provide increased funding for the basic needs of Afghan returnees in Afghanistan and refugees in host countries in the region.

53. The Special Rapporteur has engaged with Member States, urging compliance with non-refoulement obligations, emphasizing that Afghanistan does not constitute a safe country of return, given the heightened risk of persecution, especially for women and girls, the worsening human rights situation and the protracted humanitarian crisis.

54. Many Afghans who had relocated to neighbouring countries did so with the genuine expectation of being resettled to third countries. The Special Rapporteur expresses regret that States committed to third-country resettlement have reduced or halted their programmes, thereby limiting resettlement pathways for Afghans. Of particular concern are the thousands of Afghans whose resettlement to Germany and the United States remains in limbo after those States paused or stopped their sizeable resettlement programmes. Many Afghans have been left in uncertain situations, often without adequate legal remedies. The Special Rapporteur urges States to meet their moral and legal obligations to resettle these Afghans at the earliest opportunity.

IV. Groups of concern

A. Children and young people

55. The Taliban's efforts towards ideological domination and control of the population are focused significantly on children and young people – the majority of Afghanistan's population. Many policies and restrictions contravene the rights of the child directly, including the right of children to fully develop their personalities, talents and abilities and respect for their human rights and fundamental freedoms, and go against Afghanistan's obligation to provide education to children in "the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples".⁵

⁵ Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 29.

56. Under Taliban rule, children in Afghanistan are confronted with the absence of an effective child protection system, including a lack of child justice mechanisms. Moreover, there remains ambiguity regarding the legal definition of a child, which renders adolescent children particularly vulnerable to recruitment into the de facto armed forces. The Special Rapporteur also remains concerned about other grave violations against children, in particular their killing and maiming by explosive remnants of war.

57. The situation for children is further aggravated by a humanitarian crisis in which 90 per cent of young children in Afghanistan are living in food poverty.⁶ This is compounded by funding cuts and the mass arrival of returnees, among them a large number of children, including those separated from their families. The humanitarian crisis and systematic gender oppression drive rising rates of child marriage, gender-based violence and child labour.⁷

58. The content and quality of education, which is already severely restricted for girls, remain a serious concern. The de facto authorities have appointed unqualified teachers, often religious clerics, and expanded religious teaching at the cost of secular academic subjects, thereby lowering education quality. The Taliban has also continued to prioritize madrasa education, with more Islamic education centres than schools active in the country. For girls who complete grade six, madrasas are often the only viable path for further schooling, notwithstanding widespread support for secondary education for girls.⁸ Madrasas for girls that go beyond the limited scope of religious education risk being shut down and having their licences revoked. Reports indicate that the Taliban leadership's concern about general subjects being taught at madrasas has led them to decide to gradually restrict access to madrasa education for girls.

59. The Special Rapporteur, while appreciating the value of religious education as part of a holistic education for children in Afghanistan, is concerned that the education sector is being instrumentalized by the de facto authorities to entrench Taliban ideology in a new generation, under the guise of religion. This violates the de facto authorities' obligation to provide education directed towards "the development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms".⁹ Many Afghans shared their concerns with the Special Rapporteur that, under the Taliban, the focus on madrasa education may fuel radicalization and extremist ideologies.

60. The Taliban's systematic discrimination and oppression of women and girls, coupled with a severe and persistent humanitarian crisis, provides fertile ground for child labour, child marriage and forced marriage of Afghan girls and women, which is occurring, notwithstanding the Taliban's decree prohibiting such marriages. The situation is fuelling a mental health crisis, with reports of high levels of stress, anxiety, depression and increase in suicides. For example, in April 2025, a young woman in Ghor Province died by self-immolation reportedly following forced marriage and domestic abuse.

61. Children and young people are Afghanistan's future, and they have impressed the Special Rapporteur with their energy and determination to claim their rights inside and outside Afghanistan. He therefore calls for meaningful Afghan youth

⁶ See report available at www.unicef.org/afghanistan/documents/child-food-poverty.

⁷ See www.unocha.org/publications/report/afghanistan/humanitarian-organizations-afghanistan-urge-international-community-not-abandon-country.

⁸ A recent survey by the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) of 2,000 people found that 92 per cent supported secondary education for girls. See www.unwomen.org/en/digital-library/publications/2025/08/gender-alert-four-years-of-taliban-rule-afghan-women-resist-as-restrictions-tighten.

⁹ Convention on the Rights of the Child, art. 29.

participation in national and international processes that discuss Afghanistan's future, in line with the youth, peace and security agenda.

B. Ethnic and religious groups

62. During the reporting period, the Taliban continued to demonstrate a persistent disregard for the rich ethnic, religious and linguistic diversity that has shaped Afghanistan's society, culture and history. The Special Rapporteur continues to record the Taliban's violations of the rights of marginalized groups. He reiterates his previously made concerns related to discrimination, marginalization, lack of protection, absent or insufficient representation and violations of their fundamental freedoms.

63. The Special Rapporteur warns that the Taliban's disregard or oversimplification of current and historical grievances of people from distinct ethnic and religious communities is fuelling tensions. He urges the Taliban to end its current discriminatory policies and practices, including by ensuring greater representation of ethnic and religious communities in decision-making. He considers that the grievances raised by distinct ethnic, religious and linguistic communities, as well as attacks on them, have not been sufficiently documented, analysed and addressed. This includes religiously motivated attacks on minorities by Islamic State in Iraq and the Levant-Khorasan, which harm mainly Hazaras, and bear all the hallmarks of international crimes.

64. During the first eight months of 2025, the Special Rapporteur recorded several violations of religious freedom. This included the forced conversion of at least 50 Ismaili Shi'a Muslims to Sunnism in Badakhshan Province and pressure on the Shi'a community to educate their children at Sunni schools. Moreover, the de facto Ministry for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice has intensified its crackdown on religious freedoms, including regarding allegations of blasphemy and promotion of atheism and Christianity. This includes reporting on 17 July 2025 that a man was sentenced to death for blasphemy in Paktika Province. Furthermore, on 5 August 2025, the de facto Ministry claimed to have arrested six students for spreading foreign "atheist ideology".

65. The Special Rapporteur is also concerned about the use of derogatory and dehumanizing terms by the de facto authorities. For example, the de facto Minister for the Promotion of Virtue and the Prevention of Vice was cited as comparing non-Muslims with "four-legged animals".¹⁰ The Special Rapporteur also notes instances of hate speech and discrimination among Afghans, including online. Examples include the use of derogatory terms against Hazaras related to their facial features, as well as the wrongful conflation of Pashtuns with Taliban supporters or terrorists. He is concerned that such language may serve as a precursor to atrocity crimes and calls upon all Afghans to refrain from derogatory and hateful language and to respect the rights and dignity of those with different religions, ethnicities or languages.

C. Persons with disabilities

66. Persons with disabilities in Afghanistan face entrenched social stigma, with their situation exacerbated by Taliban restrictions on and recent international funding cuts to programmes that supported them. The Special Rapporteur highlights the different and intersecting vulnerabilities and challenges faced by persons with disabilities across multiple areas such as the type of disability, including physical, mental,

¹⁰ See <https://amu.tv/167755/>.

developmental or sensory, as well as gender, age and place of residence. For example, children who are deaf, hard-of-hearing or have visual impairments have difficulties enrolling in school and are no longer provided with reasonable accommodation to sit for the university entrance exam. Girls with disabilities find it especially challenging to gain access to private online education alternatives.

67. During the reporting period, persons with disabilities expressed growing frustration about the non-payment of, significantly delayed payments of or sudden reduction in their social welfare benefits by the de facto Ministry of Martyrs and Disabled Affairs, as well as non-reimbursement of out-of-pocket payments for medical treatments that are unaffordable for many.

68. The Special Rapporteur reminds the Taliban of Afghanistan's obligation as a State Party to the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities to respect the human rights of persons with long-term physical, mental, developmental or sensory impairments, including by respecting their individual autonomy and independence and consulting them on matters that affect them.

D. Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and other gender-diverse persons

69. LGBTQ+ Afghans continue to endure entrenched and systematic discrimination under Taliban rule. Same-sex conduct remains criminalized, and accusations related to same-sex relations can result in severe punishments, including corporal punishments such as public flogging, especially since the enactment of the so-called law on the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice. The law not only affirms the criminalization of same-sex relations, but also prohibits facilitating or enabling such relationships. On 29 July 2025, two men in Kabul were reportedly flogged for "sodomy", each receiving 39 lashes.

70. Beyond Taliban persecution, LGBTQ+ Afghans frequently experience violence and marginalization within their families and communities, forcing many into concealment and being cut off from social support systems and essential services. The situation is especially challenging for LGBTQ+ women, who face intersecting and compounded forms of discrimination.

71. Those who seek refuge in neighbouring countries remain at risk of violence and discrimination, and there remains a lack of support services tailored to the needs to LGBTQ+ refugees and individuals in exile. LGBTQ+ Afghans deported to Afghanistan face a heightened risk of violence and persecution. Those who had received confirmations for resettlement in Germany, the United States and other countries, some of whose cases are now stalled, remain in a precarious situation.

E. Older persons

72. The vulnerabilities of older persons in Afghanistan have been exacerbated by reductions in humanitarian assistance and the lack of effective State-run social security mechanisms. Older persons face greater risks during forced returns and natural and climate-related disasters and displacement.

73. Retired civil servants have continued to protest against the continuing lack of payment of their pensions, which has an impact on an estimated 150,000 retirees, notwithstanding the issuance of a decree in December 2024 that created a de facto court specifically for those payments. Retirees continue to report that their financial situation has become untenable, given that they have not received pensions since August 2021. However, at the end of August 2025, the de facto Ministry of Economy

announced the resumption of pension payments for former civil servants of some departments. The Special Rapporteur urges the de facto authorities to pay pension benefits, including retroactively, as soon as possible, to all those with valid claims.

74. The Special Rapporteur also underscores the impact on older persons of the lack of access to affordable healthcare, driven by reduced donor funding, the closure of healthcare facilities, and transport and other expenses, in particular for older women. The situation of older persons in prisons, who face inadequate access to healthcare, food and hygiene, is also concerning.¹¹ The Special Rapporteur urges the de facto authorities to ensure better age-appropriate conditions, provide essential health services, and to fully employ compassionate release or alternative sentences for older persons.

F. Former members of the Government, judiciary and security forces

75. Former members of the Islamic Republic's security forces and many former civilian government officials, including former judicial officers and prosecutors, remain among the at-risk populations in Afghanistan and continue to be subject to reprisals. The persistent and prevalent killing, enforced disappearance, torture and arbitrary detention of former officials, in particular former security personnel, further confirms that the so-called general amnesty announced in August 2021 is frequently disrespected.

76. While UNAMA recorded the highest spike in human rights violations against former government officials and security forces in the six months after August 2021, targeted attacks against them persist, and UNAMA and other human rights organizations continue to document hundreds of such violations each year. Meanwhile, many former officials, in particular in the security and justice sectors, who fled Afghanistan or were forced into hiding, continue to live in precarious conditions, often separated from their families for months or years out of fear of retaliation.

77. The de facto authorities continue to refer to the general amnesty and have tended to blame the ongoing violence on renegade actors, members of armed resistance groups or the settling of personal disputes. The Special Rapporteur is doubtful of these assertions and points out that, even if this were the case, it would not absolve the de facto authorities of their international obligations to protect all persons in Afghanistan against extrajudicial and summary killings, enforced disappearances and torture. In addition, the de facto authorities have yet to take meaningful action to combat the apparent impunity under which these acts are carried out.

V. Social and economic rights

78. While acknowledging that the economy is no longer in freefall and has shown modest growth in gross domestic product (GDP), the Special Rapporteur cautions against equating GDP increases with improved socioeconomic conditions for the population. Economists note that the per capita GDP in Afghanistan has not grown owing to its fast-growing population and the mass return of refugees. The socioeconomic situation of many Afghans also remains heavily dependent on international donor support, estimated at 14 per cent of GDP in 2024, which has shrunk significantly in 2025. United Nations Development Programme figures indicate that subsistence insecurity increased in 2024 by 6 per cent, concluding that

¹¹ See communication [OTH 46/2025](#).

some three quarters of the population is subsistence-insecure, in particular in relation to housing, healthcare affordability and essential household items

79. Any benefits of the modest growth in GDP are unlikely to reach the most at-risk, marginalized and vulnerable populations. The United Nations Development Programme listed women-headed households, internally displaced persons and rural households as bearing the brunt of the economic and humanitarian pressure. According to the World Bank, women and young persons, in particular educated young people, have the most difficulty in gaining access to jobs.

80. The de facto authorities allocate resources with an extreme lack of transparency, including through their refusal to publish budget expenditure plans. Consequently, it is unclear whether and to what extent they are taking fiscal measures to support the people of Afghanistan as external donor support declines. The Special Rapporteur also received credible reports of aid deviation by the Taliban during the reporting period.

81. During the reporting period, the de facto authorities introduced arbitrary austerity measures, including wage reductions, cuts to social security benefits and the downsizing of the civil service by an estimated 20 per cent. These measures reportedly affect both military and civilian civil service personnel, including women teachers.

82. Statistical information from the de facto authorities indicates that women were already severely underrepresented in the civil service – an estimated 17 per cent of personnel at the end of 2024, with more than 90 per cent of them confined to the education sector.

83. The Special Rapporteur is concerned that the drastic cut in the civil service further marginalizes women and religious and ethnic minorities, while replacing experienced professionals with Taliban affiliates who lack the necessary expertise. This has reduced both access to and the quality of essential services and reinforced the widespread perception that the de facto authorities are inherently biased and unrepresentative of Afghan society.

84. The Special Rapporteur is also concerned about the security risks linked to the loss of livelihoods, for example, in Badakhshan Province. In May and June 2025, the Taliban killed and injured dozens of people and arbitrarily arrested scores more as they protested against poppy eradication. The response was similar to, but more severe than, events in the province during the previous year. These incidents illustrate how volatile the security situation can become when livelihoods are threatened and communities feel neither heard nor represented in processes that affect their rights.

Housing, land and property rights

85. Land disputes triggered by third-party claims, infrastructure projects and the confiscation of what the Taliban deems usurped land continued during the reporting period. While disputes over land and claims of usurpation occur across Afghanistan and may be made in good faith, they disproportionately affect minorities and internally displaced persons.

86. Minorities such as Hazaras, Uzbeks and Turkmen have shared examples with the Special Rapporteur of renewed land claims, often from Kuchis, a predominantly Pashtun group with a rich nomadic and pastoral heritage and which is increasingly (semi-)sedentary. Different parties often refer to historical documents with disputes handled through informal dispute resolution mechanisms or de facto courts. Regardless of the mechanism, representatives of minority communities facing such

claims report feeling powerless, distrustful and fearful of the de facto authorities, often referring to their alleged bias or close connections with claimants. Those affected also highlight incidents in which threats and violence were used to enforce land claims.

87. When rulings favour claimants, affected communities often face dispossession, loss of livelihoods and property and, in some cases, forced evictions, eroding the social fabric of communities.

88. Without prejudging the validity of land claims from any party, the Special Rapporteur is concerned about the associated violence, arbitrary detention and lack of access to a fair trial or dispute settlement mechanisms. He also underscores the Taliban's lack of compliance with international standards and procedural safeguards for housing, land and property rights. He reiterates the need for prior consultations, a reasonable notice period, the provision of legal remedies and legal aid, adequate compensation for loss or damage to property, and measures to prevent displacement.

VI. International justice and accountability

89. Impunity for serious human rights violations and crimes committed in Afghanistan, both past and present, is a persistent challenge, and suspected perpetrators continue to evade accountability. Entrenched impunity not only perpetuates cycles of violence and abuse, but also exacerbates the suffering of survivors, victims and their families, who are denied their rights to justice, truth, reparation and guarantees of non-repetition. Ending impunity is an essential component for the emergence of a safe, stable and rights-respecting Afghanistan. As the Special Rapporteur has noted on several occasions, the prospects for achieving justice within Afghanistan in the current context are virtually non-existent. At present, the only avenues available to the people of Afghanistan lie in international forums.

90. There have been encouraging steps in this regard. On 8 July 2025, Pre-Trial Chamber II of the International Criminal Court announced that it had issued warrants of arrest for the Taliban leader, Hibatullah Akhundzada, and the Taliban de facto Chief Justice, Abdul Hakim Haqqani, owing to their alleged responsibility for the crime against humanity of persecution on gender and political grounds against persons perceived as "allies of girls and women". The announcement followed a request submitted on 23 January 2025 by the Court's Prosecutor, who also advised that applications for further arrest warrants were forthcoming. The Special Rapporteur hopes that these will also address the crimes committed against other persons and groups in Afghanistan, including by other actors.

91. Afghan human rights defenders, the Special Rapporteur and other United Nations and international experts welcomed the announcement. The Special Rapporteur especially welcomes the Pre-Trial Chamber II's acknowledgement that gender persecution encompasses both direct acts of violence and systemic and institutionalized forms of harm, including the imposition of discriminatory societal norms.

92. Meanwhile, efforts are under way to hold Afghanistan accountable for violations of its obligations under international treaties to which it is a State Party. This includes an initiative announced in September 2024 by the Governments of Australia, Canada, Germany and the Kingdom of the Netherlands formally calling upon Afghanistan to cease its violations of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. The initiative could potentially lead to a case against Afghanistan at the International Court of Justice. To date, 25 United Nations Member States have expressed their support.

93. Since the announcement, several virtual and in-person consultations have been held between the four initiating States and Afghan civil society members. The Special Rapporteur supports inclusive participation and representation of Afghan activists, in particular women, and strongly encourages efforts to promote transparency throughout the process.

94. Afghan civil society is playing a key role in promoting international accountability. For example, in August 2025, four Afghan NGOs announced the establishment of a people's tribunal for the women of Afghanistan before the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal, an international opinion tribunal that will focus on crimes committed by the Taliban against the women of Afghanistan, including gender persecution. The initiative, which emphasizes the voices and experiences of victims and survivors, benefits from the participation of Afghan legal practitioners and international experts. The Special Rapporteur also continues to support the strengthening and expansion of pathways for accountability.

Codification of gender apartheid

95. Against the backdrop of intensifying Taliban gender oppression and discrimination, Afghan human rights defenders, in particular women, LGBTQ+ and other activists, as well as lawyers from around the world, have continued to advocate for the codification of gender apartheid as an international crime. As the Special Rapporteur has previously noted, Afghan women have, since the 1990s, used the concept of gender apartheid to describe their lived realities under the Taliban, and the concept continues to mobilize policy and legal advocacy.

96. The existing international legal framework prohibits specific gender-based crimes, including the crime against humanity of persecution on grounds of gender. The Special Rapporteur strongly supports the investigation and prosecution of these and other international crimes. However, he considers that the international legal framework does not sufficiently sanction or prohibit institutionalized regimes of systematic gender discrimination, oppression and domination such as the one now imposed in Afghanistan, and he strongly supports efforts to close this legal gap through the codification of the crime of gender apartheid.

97. In December 2024, the General Assembly adopted resolution [79/122](#) by consensus in order to advance negotiations to formulate and conclude a treaty on the prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity, with preparatory sessions mandated for 2026 and 2027, followed by formal negotiations in 2028 and 2029. The Special Rapporteur considers this to be a critical opportunity to codify an inclusive crime of gender apartheid as part of a broader, gender-competent international treaty. As the negotiations process begins, it will be essential that Afghan experts be able to have access to these international forums in order to participate meaningfully in discussions.

VII. Conclusion

98. More than four years after the Taliban retook power, and notwithstanding attempts to press for moderation through engagement with them, the human rights situation in Afghanistan continues to deteriorate. Rather than being deterred by international entreaties, the Taliban has become increasingly emboldened, flouting Afghanistan's international obligations both in rhetoric and in practice. It is both inexplicable and unjustifiable that escalating and entrenching human rights violations, including gender persecution, the erasure of civic space, reprisals against

dissenters and the resurgence of cruel and inhumane punishments, are being met with growing signs of acceptance or normalization.

99. Equally alarming is the sharp reduction in humanitarian aid and other assistance for Afghans, as well as the forced returns and deportations of millions. These actions directly undermine the well-being and rights of the Afghan people. Meeting their basic needs demands increased, not diminished, international commitment. Those who continue to assert their rights also require sustained protection, as well as political and financial support.

100. Nevertheless, there are some pockets of hope, in particular in the pursuit of justice and accountability. Recent developments, such as the International Criminal Court's issuance of arrest warrants for two senior Taliban leaders, an initiative to challenge Afghanistan under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the creation of the people's tribunal for the women of Afghanistan under the Permanent Peoples' Tribunal and efforts to codify gender apartheid as an international crime, mark critical advances. The participation of Afghan women in technical discussions tied to the Doha process is also an encouraging sign, although far more is needed to ensure their full and meaningful inclusion.

101. The international community has repeatedly expressed its vision for a peaceful Afghanistan, one that is at peace with itself and its neighbours, fully reintegrated into the global community and upholds its international obligations. However, this vision remains unrealized, in part owing to a lack of unified, principled international action. What is urgently needed is a stronger, swifter and more coherent strategy, rooted in human rights and inclusive of Afghanistan's diverse voices. Far from being barriers to political progress, the inclusion and meaningful participation of all Afghans are the building blocks of durable peace and a brighter future.

VIII. Recommendations

102. **The Special Rapporteur reiterates his detailed recommendations set out in previous reports, which remain applicable and unfortunately unimplemented in large part. This includes recommendations related to dismantling the system of institutionalized gender oppression and discrimination by lifting the ban on education and restrictions on the right to work and freedom of movement for women and girls, among others; ending public executions, corporal punishments and other acts of torture and ill treatment; enhancing the protection of children, human rights defenders, former government and security officials, LGBTQ+ persons and persons with disabilities; ending discrimination against minority and marginalized groups; and ensuring the respect, protection and fulfilment of economic, social and cultural rights, without discrimination.**

103. **Reinforcing the above-mentioned recommendations, the Special Rapporteur urges the de facto authorities to take immediate steps to:**

(a) **Dismantle the institutionalized system of gender discrimination and persecution, including by:**

(i) **Revoking all policies and practices that deprive women and girls of rights and fundamental freedoms and that violate Afghanistan's international human rights obligations, including the so-called law on the promotion of virtue and the prevention of vice;**

(ii) **Recognize the full legal capacity of women and girls, ensure their rights to freedom of movement, expression and association, education,**

work, health and equal participation in public life, and refrain from criminalizing or punishing them, or their family members, for exercising their rights;

(iii) Ensure that women and girls have full and equal access to justice and other remedies without discrimination, as well as legal and institutional protections, including institutions ensuring support for survivors of gender-based violence;

(b) End public executions and corporal punishments by imposing an immediate moratorium with a view to abolishing these punishments and take urgent steps to end all forms of torture and ill-treatment, in particular during arrest, interrogation and detention, including by enabling and facilitating independent monitoring in all places of detention, ensuring accountability and strengthening training programmes;

(c) End the systematic repression of civic space, in particular targeting individuals critical of the de facto authorities, by:

(i) Ceasing all acts of violence, arbitrary detention and intimidation of human rights defenders, journalists and media workers, political commentators, artists and writers, among others;

(ii) Ending all forms of censorship, control or interference in the operations, content or structures of media outlets and civil society organizations that are incompatible with the rights to freedom of expression, association and peaceful assembly;

(d) Take further steps to the maximum of its available resources, with a view to achieving progressively the full realization of economic, social and cultural rights, including by:

(i) Publishing a transparent and accessible State budget that clearly outlines revenue and expenditure;

(ii) Prioritizing the humanitarian and basic needs of the population without discrimination, including access to healthcare, education, shelter, water and food, as well as climate resilience and environmental protection programmes;

(iii) Adopting and implementing protocols relating to housing, land and property rights in accordance with international human rights law and standards, including safeguards against forced evictions, and specific protections for displaced persons, minority and marginalized communities, as well as other at-risk or vulnerable groups;

(iv) Refraining from and preventing the diversion or obstruction of humanitarian aid and ensuring that women humanitarians can operate freely without interference;

(v) Ensuring the timely and equitable administration of pension payments and social welfare benefits, without discrimination;

(e) Enable meaningful consultation and participation of all people from Afghanistan, in particular women and girls, young people, members of minority and marginalized groups and persons with disabilities, in decisions that affect them.

104. The Special Rapporteur recommends that States urgently take steps to:

(a) Refrain from the normalization of relations with the de facto authorities until there are demonstrated, measurable and independently verified improvements in the human rights situation, in particular for women and girls;

(b) Develop and implement a coordinated, multilateral response to the findings of the 2023 independent assessment, including a comprehensive action plan with clear human rights benchmarks, timelines, independent monitoring mechanisms and dedicated resources to support the protection and promotion of human rights in Afghanistan;

(c) Uphold the women and peace and security and youth, peace and security agendas by ensuring the full, safe, equal and meaningful participation and inclusion of diverse groups of Afghans, in particular women, young people and members of minority and marginalized communities, in all deliberations concerning the country's future, including the Doha process and its related meetings and working groups;

(d) Strengthen human rights diplomacy and advocacy efforts, including through engagement by States, institutions and scholars and experts in Islamic law, to press the de facto authorities to end ongoing human rights violations;

(e) Ensure adequate and sustained funding for humanitarian response, human rights work, protection measures, transitional justice initiatives, climate action and environmental programmes, including by:

(i) Reversing funding cuts and prioritizing long-term, accessible support for Afghan-led organizations;

(ii) Developing mechanisms and programmes to advance the economic, social and cultural rights of the people of Afghanistan that go beyond humanitarian support, without benefiting or legitimizing the Taliban;

(iii) Expanding protection for at-risk Afghans, especially women and girls, human rights defenders, journalists and LGBTQ+ persons, including through safe houses, legal aid resettlement and emergency grants;

(iv) Supporting survivor-centred pathways to justice through international, national and Afghan civil-society-led mechanisms;

(v) Expanding truth-seeking, memorialization, reparation and documentation initiatives, including through a well-resourced United Nations-led independent investigation mechanism;

(f) Support the inclusion of gender apartheid as a crime against humanity in the prospective treaty on the prevention and punishment of crimes against humanity;

(g) Uphold the principle of non-refoulement by halting the deportations and involuntary returns of Afghans, protect Afghans refugees and those in exile from discrimination, harassment and intimidation, expand and enhance resettlement pathways, and ensure adequate support for host countries.