



AkiDwA Statement on the Situation facing Women and Girls in Afghanistan

We at AkiDwA write in light of the rapidly changing political situation in Afghanistan as the Taliban seize the capital city of Kabul. We stand in solidarity with the people of Afghanistan, in particular the women, girls and children. We are horrified at the injustices and harm already experienced by the Afghan people, and even more so in the last few weeks. As a feminist organisation whose end-goal is to promote gender justice and equality in the global migrant community, we know too well the structural and entrenched barriers Afghan women and girls face to live a life free from violence and harm.

Historically, the women of Afghanistan have found themselves at the toxic intersection of decades of war, political and economic instability, the total collapse of basic services, from clean water to safe health care, the weaponization in the ideologies of foreign powers and religious extremists who justify gender-based violence in the name of faith. The devastating impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic adds to the misery and gravity of the situation now facing the Afghan people, especially women and girls. According to journalists and United Nations' representatives, up to half a million people have been displaced as a result of the recent Taliban offensive.

Afghan women and girls are being let down again. The tragic and personal sacrifices endured by them and the Afghan people in their pursuit for justice and equality must not be in vain. The international community, American, British and Afghan governments have a moral duty to safeguard and protect not only activists but all Afghans.

AkiDwA calls for the following:

- We ask neighbouring countries to keep their borders open and ensure safe passage to fleeing refugees.
- We ask that any efforts to resolve this political crisis involve Afghan women and the indigenous women human rights movement as central partners and coalition members.
- We urge the international women's movements and all those fighting for the right to a life free from violence and oppression to lobby their governments and write/e-mail to their political representatives urging action that centres the needs of and partners with Afghan women and people.
- We wish to emphasise the importance of protecting and promoting human rights and democratic freedoms. We call on the international community to support women in Afghanistan at this time, and to ensure that pressure is placed on the new regime to safeguard any progress made in women's rights since 2001, e.g. the 2009 ERAW law, from reversal.

Established in 2001, AkiDwA is a national network of Africans and migrant women in Ireland Registered Charity Number 2006341; CHY: 17227 Address: Unit 2, Killarney Court, Buckingham Street, Dublin 1. www.akidwa.ie

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