



**Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Ministry of Women's Affairs**

**Statement by
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Minister of Women's Affairs**

**At Fifty-Seventh Session of the UN
Commission on the Status of Women -
New York, 2013**

In The Name of Allah,

The Chairperson, Excellencies, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen!

On behalf of the people of Afghanistan, it is a privilege and great pleasure to convey our warm greetings and best wishes, to all distinguished delegates attending the Fifty-Seventh Session of the Commission on the Status of Women. I also thank you for the invaluable opportunity to address this esteemed session.

Chairperson,

I begin by re-affirming my Government's commitment to the achievement of gender equality and the empowerment of all Afghan women. The Government considers the role and participation of women in the economic and social growth of the country as essential. At national planning level, the ANDS gender strategy was formulated alongside the Afghanistan Development Strategy (ANDS), spanning our national priority programs, especially those relating to human-centered development. The three pillars of the National Action Plan on Women in Afghanistan (NAPWA), namely security; governance, rule of law and human rights; and economic and social development form the foundation upon which we are advancing the gender equality agenda in my country's Transformation Decade (2015 – 2024). The Government is committed to implementing UN Security Council Resolution 1325, and to ensure that Afghan women are meaningfully represented in all stages of the reconciliation and transition process. Protection of rights of women and girls remains high on the Government's agenda. This is well demonstrated by the Outcome Document of the Tokyo Conference of July 2012, when the Government committed to implementing the Law on Elimination of Violence against Women (2009) and the National Action Plan for Women.

In the last decade, Afghanistan has made good progress in social, economical and political arenas that will ultimately result to the elimination of all forms of violence against women. In line with the Afghanistan's National Development Strategy, programs have been implemented to address root causes of violence against women through programs in rural and remote areas, campaigned by the Ministries of Agriculture and Livelihood, Rural Development, Education, Higher

Education, Ministry of Interior, the Judiciary and Justice Offices as well as NGOs which have played significant roles. Based on the gains already achieved, we are optimistic about the future of Afghanistan, and especially in light of the increased participation of women in the fields of law, economy, education, health and politics. Some of the key areas of achievements demonstrating progress in women development are as outlined below.

1. Increments in the number of companies of business women up to 760 companies.
2. Increased number of women presence in deferent levels of Government Offices up to 25 percent.
3. Increased number of female teachers in schools up to 31 percent.
4. Increased number of female students in universities up to 19 percent.
5. Reduction of maternal mortality rate from each 30 minutes to 4 hours.
6. Increased number of female lecturers in universities up to 15 percent.
7. Increment in the number of female students in schools up to 40 percent.
8. Establishment of Prosecution Offices on Elimination of Violence against Women in the structure of Attorney General's Office in 10 provinces.
9. The Establishment of EVAW Commission in the provinces and the presence of women in High Peace Council demonstrates the way towards progress in women development.

Dear International Partners!

As it was presented above, we are continuing our efforts to retain our achievements and to bring further development. But, in some of the rural and remotes areas women are still deprived of their legal rights, and are being violated. I am pointing here at some of the causes and elements of violence against women in few short paragraphs below.

1. The three and half decades of imposed wars and insecurity intensified the morale of violence. Therefore, the government of Afghanistan is seriously working on the national peace and reconciliation programs with the antigovernment elements and illegal armed groups and it is true that, violence problems can't be reduced when there is no national peace and stability all over Afghanistan.
2. Existence of unappealing customs and traditions in some parts of rural and remote areas are another elements of violence to the individual, family and social life of the people that, we are seriously struggling against through illumination of the public opinion in the Islamic context, mobilization of Ullamas and religious scholars, implementation of laws, and establishment of women networks with the supports of Ministry of Hajj and Religious Affairs, the Ullama Council of Afghanistan, Media and press.
3. Propaganda and interference of the enemies of peace and stability on inverting the truth due to political and regional intervention.
4. Low level of education and awareness from the endorsed laws of Afghanistan.
5. Poverty and low level of economy of the people.

Distinguished participants!

Despite of all various political, security challenges and problems of violence against women, we are sure that we will be having a prosperous and peaceful future. The Government of Islamic Republic of Afghanistan are taking the necessary measures to eliminate the political, cultural and domestic causes and motives of violence to bring tranquility, sincerity, peace and stability in the family and community lives of Afghan people.

We are committed for continuing our efforts to promote the economic stamina of families, girls' education and public awareness and need more supports of international and national NGOs.

Our strategies and needs in this crucial situation focus on the following issues.

- To retain the past one decade achievement of Afghan women and girls, it is necessary to support the peace and reconciliation process of Afghanistan.
- We want the international community to remain committed and continue their cooperation on supporting the programs for women empowerment conformity to the strategic plan of the Islamic republic of Afghanistan that the rights of afghan women should be realized in the fields of politic and economy.

Thank you very much.