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The repressive environment in Afghanistan, including public executions and violence against women

European Parliament resolution of 14 March 2024 on the repressive environment in Afghanistan, including public executions and violence against women (2024/2617(RSP))

(C/2024/6557)

The European Parliament,

— having regard to its previous resolutions on Afghanistan,

— having regard to Rules 144(5) and 132(4) of its Rules of Procedure,

A. whereas since taking over the country the Taliban have dismantled the judicial system, ordered judges to fully implement Sharia and resumed public executions and cruel punishments such as flogging and stoning; whereas five public executions have since taken place with thousands in attendance;

B. whereas the Taliban have virtually erased women and girls from public life; whereas restrictions on their rights include barring their access to work, travel and healthcare without a male relative, banning education beyond sixth grade, denying access to public places and sports, violently enforcing a strict dress code and dismantling the support system for victims of violence;

C. whereas minorities, such as the Hazaras and Tajiks, face growing repression and discrimination;

1. Expresses its grave concern about the humanitarian and human rights crises in Afghanistan since the Taliban takeover; recalls Afghanistan's international human rights obligations; reiterates its unwavering commitment to the Afghan people and to upholding their rights and freedoms secured over the past 20 years;

2. Condemns the Taliban's radical interpretation and enforcement of Sharia and the attempted erasure of women and girls from public life, which amounts to gender persecution and gender apartheid; calls for the full, equal and meaningful participation of women and girls in public life to be immediately restored, particularly their access to education and work; commends the courage of Afghanistan's women and stands in solidarity with them;

3. Calls on the de facto Afghan authorities to reopen the nationwide support system for victims of violence against women and girls, and to ensure ways of seeking shelter, medical care, legal recourse and reparations;

4. Calls for victims of violence against women and girls to be released from prison, where they are being held in inhumane conditions to the detriment of their mental and physical health ([1]);

5. Urges the de facto Afghan authorities to abolish capital punishment and immediately halt public executions, other cruel or inhuman punishments and its discrimination against and barbaric persecution of women and girls, and LGBTIQ+, ethnic and religious minorities, in particular;

6. Condemns the arbitrary detention of human rights defenders, including Manizha Seddiqi, Ahmad Fahim Azimi, Sediqullah Afghan, Fardin Fedayee and Ezatullah Zwab; calls for their immediate and unconditional release;

7. Insists on maintaining strictly conditional engagement with the Taliban based on the five benchmarks set by the Council and the UN Special Rapporteur's recommendations;

([1]) United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan, Divergence of Practice: The Handling of Complaints of Gender-Based Violence against Women and Girls by Afghanistan's de facto Authorities, December 2023.

8. Supports Afghan civil society's calls to hold the de facto authorities accountable for their crimes, particularly through the International Criminal Court investigation, by establishing a UN Independent Investigative Mechanism and expanding EU restrictive measures;

9. Urges the EU and Member States to increase humanitarian aid and funding to support basic needs and livelihoods and Afghan civil society; urges Member States to issue humanitarian visas to persecuted women and human rights defenders and to finish evacuating local Afghan staff left behind;

10. Calls on the international community and, in particular, regional actors to maintain pressure on the de facto Afghan authorities; highlights that the forced return of Afghans puts them at risk;

11. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the Member States, the UN and the de facto Afghan authorities.