

Afghanistan 2018-2020

Candidate for the UN Human Rights Council



Together for the Promotion and Protection of Human Rights for All

www.afghanistan-un.org/hrc



With regards to human rights,
Afghanistan has come a long way.

Why Our Candidature?

Afghanistan has accomplished many practical achievements in the field of human rights, particularly since the fall of the Taliban regime in late 2001. Yet, there are many challenges ahead that can be overcome through collective efforts and effective international cooperation. The Afghan Constitution, in its preamble, states the importance of the UN Charter and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, while specific articles ensure the rights of every individual. Under Article 58, the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC) has been established to monitor human rights matters in the country.



15 Years of Achievements



Proactive Engagement



Promotion of Diversity



In the Heart of Asia

Since 2001, Afghanistan has moved towards the progressive realization of human rights values and principles; as such, Afghanistan would be an experienced partner and valuable asset in furthering and improving the work of the Human Rights Council.

During this time, Afghanistan's interaction with the world has been unprecedented. A large number of UN Member States have been helpful in its reconstruction and development, as well as incorporation of global human rights values, with rational local values and traditions.

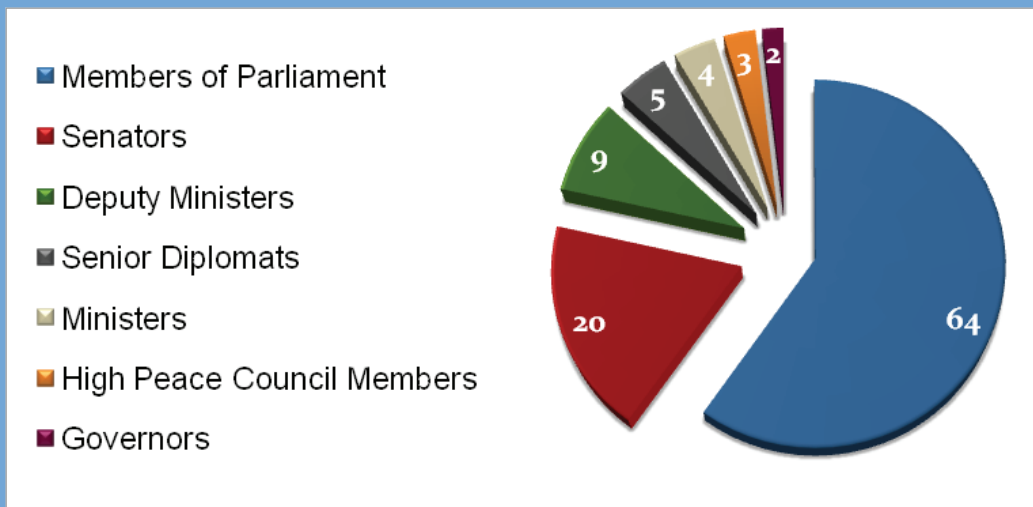
For Afghanistan, this is the time to consolidate the gains of the past 15 years. We also want to foster the richness of our kinship, hospitality, and cultural diversity. Standing on the Human Rights Council platform would amplify our voice and ensure that past gains are protected and new endeavors started.

Afghanistan sits between Central Asia, South Asia, Far East, and West Asia. Located in the middle of this diverse region, Afghanistan is truly the heart of Asia. Within the Afghan-led Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process, the whole region is seriously committed to fostering dialogue and promoting cooperation.

Our Achievements in Civil and Political Rights

Afghanistan is a party to 7 International Human Rights Instruments:

1. International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);
2. International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR);
3. International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (ICERD);
4. Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment (CAT);
5. Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW);
6. Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC);
7. International Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD).



**Number of Women
in State
Institutions**



Women's Political Participation

Women's participation in Afghan politics is one of the country's major achievements. The Constitution mandates a 27% quota of women as members of parliament. Through the years, women's participation in the political life of the country has been extended to key positions such as ministers and governors.



Freedom of Speech

Freedom of speech is one of the major achievements of the Government. Numerous print and audio-visual media are active in various parts of the country without any fear of prosecution. The 2016 World Press Freedom Index ranks Afghanistan as the 4th best among 13 countries of South and Central Asia.



Access to Education

Afghanistan has made remarkable progress in granting children access to education. According to the 2014 Annual Report of the Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission (AIHRC), 95% of the children have access to education; out of them more than 94% has access to public education centers.



Protection of Land Property Rights

Article 40 of the Afghan Constitution ensures the right to own and acquire private property for all Afghan citizens, as well as the protection of individual's properties from illegal confiscations.



Protection of the Right to Life

Article 23 of the Constitution states that "Life is the gift of God as well as the natural right of human beings." Afghanistan has been fully committed to this right, paying special attention to the protection of civilians, particularly through the establishment and training of the Afghan National Police and Afghan Local Police.



Prosecution of Human Rights Violations

One of Afghanistan's achievements in this field is the accession to the Rome Statute. The Government has worked to build capacity for the necessary coordination mechanisms for the fulfillment of the commitments in relation to the Statute.



وَأَمْرٌ هُوَ شُرُورٌ وَإِن تَبْتَغُوا لَهُم مَّا كَرِهُوا لَكُمْ وَإِنَّكُمْ لَأَعْيُنُهُمْ أَغْرَابٌ بِأَعْيُنِنَا



وَأَعْيُنُهُمْ أَغْرَابٌ بِأَعْيُنِنَا

Our National Policies and Initiatives

Afghanistan has adopted several policies and initiatives for the furthering of human rights. Among them, the following are of particular importance:

Development, adoption and commencement of the implementation phase of the National Action Plan for Afghanistan on Resolution 1325 of the United Nations Security Council (Women, Peace and Security).

Establishment of the gender and women's affairs committee under the auspices of the Second Vice President and establishment of provincial committees to better address women's issue in every province.

Implementation of the national strategy to combat violence against women; establishment of the High Commission for the Elimination of Violence Against Women under the auspices of the Minister of Women's Affairs.

Establishment of special courts and prosecution offices to eliminate violence against women within the organizational framework of the legal system, and ensuring the rights to a fair trial for all.

Adoption and enforcement of regulations on the Elimination of Sexual Harassment.

Children's protection units are operational in different regions of the country to prevent their recruitment in the armed forces.

Work is ongoing to revise the penal code and professionalize the Afghan National Police; the Government has submitted its first periodic report to the United Nations Committee Against Torture.



Our Commitments at National Level

Afghanistan has pledged to take the following actions at the national level:

Approving laws on prevention and prohibition of torture

Considering to join the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (OPCAT)

Strengthening Afghanistan's relations with the International Criminal Court

Establishing a High Council of Governance, Rule of Law, and Anti-Corruption under the supervision of the President, and finalizing an anti-corruption action plan

Preparing a national judicial reform program and presenting it to the cabinet for approval





Our Future Commitments at Global Level

In the context of the international community, our pledges are as follows:

As a member of the Council, we will be committed to the Promotion and Protection of political, civil, economic, social, and cultural rights globally.

We will work to improve the effectiveness of collective efforts by the international community to further strengthen human rights institutions and mechanisms.

We will utilize the Universal Periodic Review (UPR) as a valuable and effective mechanism for the promotion and protection of human rights.

We believe in non-politicization of the mechanisms of the Council in order to gain universal and comprehensive results in the promotion and protection of human rights.

We will make use of the Special Procedures Mechanism as a key tool in bringing to the consideration of the Council the voices and needs of the most vulnerable.

We will seek to increase the effectiveness of international cooperation in addressing human rights challenges through dialogue, capacity building, and technical assistance.



Afghanistan as a Member of the Human Rights Council

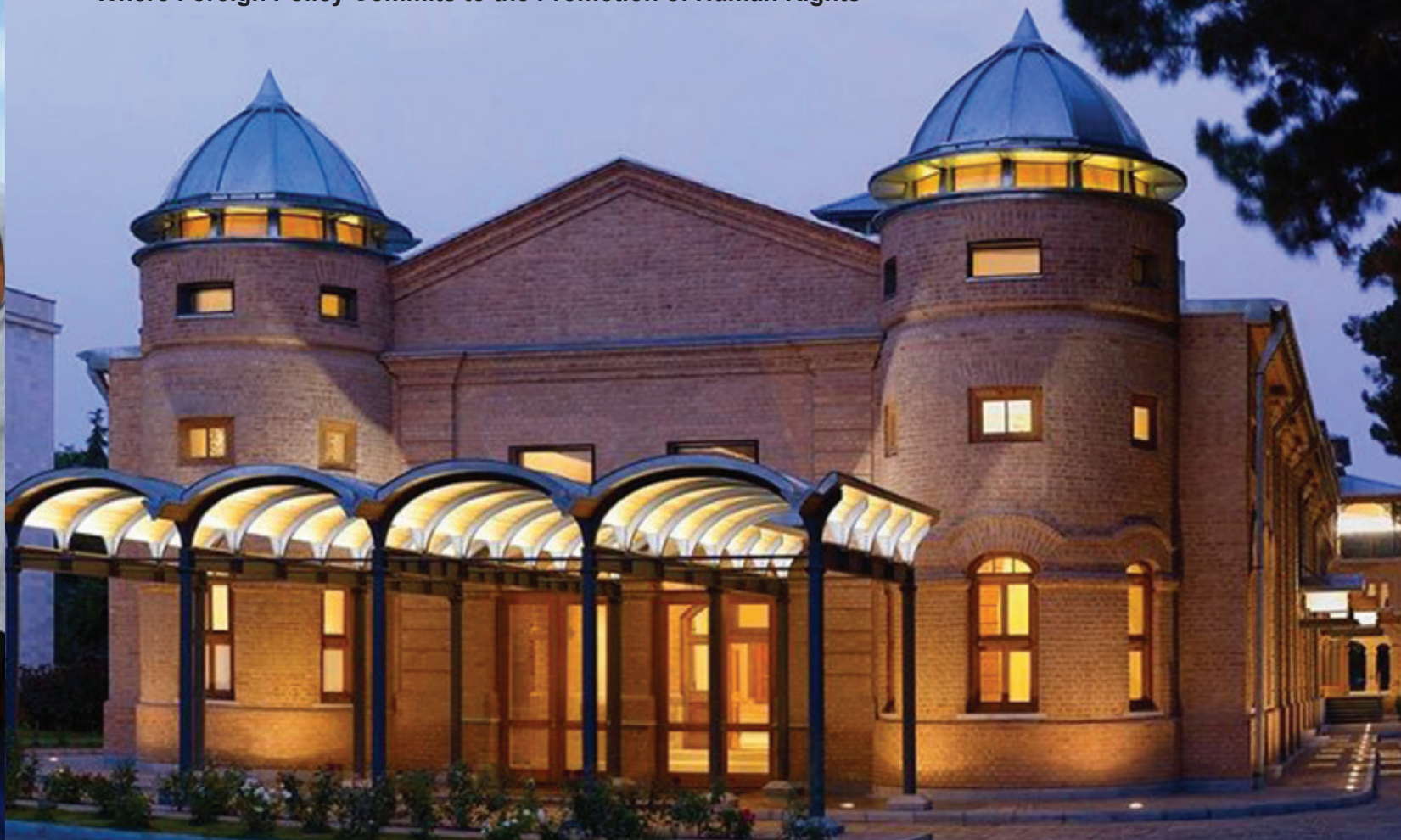
Given the context of conflict and the socio-economic realities, we are fully aware that we are still faced with numerous challenges. The Afghan Government considers constructive dialogue as an important and valuable step to exchange views and share experiences with the international community, as well as to learn best practices from other nations in improving human rights.

As a member of the Human Rights Council, Afghanistan will have the opportunity to share with Member States its achievements, objectives, and challenges, as well as approaches to finding solutions to issues of humanitarian nature, especially in conflict affected countries. Recognizing that development, peace and security, and human rights are interconnected in nature and mutually reinforcing, Afghanistan stands ready to assume its first mandate in the Human Rights Council, committed to promoting and protecting human rights and fundamental freedoms for all through effective international cooperation.





Where Foreign Policy Commits to the Promotion of Human Rights



**Historic Storay Palace, Recently Renovated
Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan**



Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan



www.afghanistan-un.org/hrc

