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31st Special Session of the Human Rights Council on the serious human rights concerns and situation in Afghanistan

Joint oral statement by the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID), MADRE, and the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom¹

The United Nations and its member states have let the people of Afghanistan down. You have encouraged and supported women human rights defenders, journalists, and other civil society actors to build a new Afghanistan. But then you ignored their analysis and calls to action. In engaging with the UN and other processes, these women have put their lives and the lives of family members at risk. They are now understandably angry and feel betrayed by the international system. They are right.

The unfolding human rights and humanitarian crises in the country demand a robust response from the Human Rights Council. The rights of women and girls and their future participation in Afghan society must be protected. The very least this Council can do is to secure accountability, redress and prevention. It must establish without delay a robust investigative mechanism into all violations and abuses by all parties, including the Taliban. The mechanism must be mandated to investigate any gendered dimensions of such violations and abuses. It must be mandated to report regularly, including intersessionally, and be adequately resourced.

¹ See also *A strong credible outcome from the HRC Special Session on Afghanistan is imperative*, Written Statement by WILPF to the HRC Special Session
https://www.wilpf.org/wilpf_statements/need-for-credible-outcome-from-hrc-special-session-on-afghanistan/