

1 July 2022

**UN Human Rights Council, 50th ordinary session (13 June to 8 July 2022)**

**Urgent debate on human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan**

**“We are not living, we are surviving ”**

This statement is supported by WILPF Afghanistan and Afghanistan Peace House.

We welcome this Human Rights Council’s urgent debate on the human rights of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Ten months after 15 August 2021, Afghan girls and women, including myself feel betrayed. The situation seems hopeless! The international community has been unconscionably passive in the face of this tragic and dramatic worsening of the situation. Afghan women activists like me are being brought to countries across the globe but we have to ask: are you really listening to us? We listen to platitudes, to concerns but there is no action. You have responsibilities, I remind you of those responsibilities today.

For the past 10 months, international action has been focused on humanitarian aid but in most provinces, aid is not reaching women and girls. Women and girls have far less access to financial assistance than reported. There is insufficient oversight, accountability, and gender sensitivity in aid delivery and funding. We need the international community to address this.

However, support and funding for civil society should not be limited to humanitarian aid. Funding and programming on women's and girls’ rights and support for women’s fulsome participation in political, peace and security processes are critical and must urgently resume. To help us achieve that the economic, social, and political situation of the Afghan people, especially women and girls, requires sincere and urgent action from the United Nations and States.

All women’s rights are being erased, and we cannot even protest! Many widows cannot feed their children and are having to sell their children to survive. Violence against women and girls is normalised, and child and forced marriage have strongly increased. Women’s and girls’ fundamental rights, including our rights to education and work, must be safeguarded.

We call on all of you to uphold your commitments to Afghan women and girls, to listen to us to inform all policies and actions on Afghanistan. We urge this Council to continue to closely monitor and ensure regular reporting on the situation of women and girls.

Thank you.