

9 September 2024

UN Human Rights Council, 57th session (9 September — 11 October 2024)

Item 2: Enhanced interactive dialogue on the OHCHR report on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and the oral update by the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan

Statement on Afghanistan

Speaker: Negina Yari via video

The High Commissioner's report¹ is another stark illustration of the continuing deterioration of the situation in Afghanistan, including ongoing, systemic gender persecution. An urgent and effective response to gender persecution and other international crimes, including against religious and ethnic minorities, is imperative. I reiterate a call on this Council to put in place an independent gender-responsive accountability mechanism to complement the mandate of the Special Rapporteur.

The institutionalised framework of gender apartheid within which gender persecution takes place underscores the international community's obligation to ensure that any engagement with the Taliban does not normalise their oppression. The immense suffering of Afghan women and girls and their right to participation must not be overlooked for the sake of political expediency.² I urge all States and the UN to ensure the full, equal, effective and safe participation of diverse Afghan women civil society in all discussions about our country. Do not fail us.

The manipulation of humanitarian aid is further exacerbating the crisis, as aid is diverted or withheld to enforce oppressive policies. It is critical that international donors and agencies ensure that aid is distributed transparently and equitably, without being co-opted by those perpetuating gender apartheid.

Ensuring ongoing, flexible, direct funding to women-led organisations in Afghanistan, including for mental health services, is also critical.

¹ A stocktaking of accountability options and processes for human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan - Report of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, UN index: A/HRC/57/22 (3 September 2024). Available at this [link](#)

² See also WILPF's **Statement on Gender Apartheid in Afghanistan** made to the 56th session of the Human Rights Council, available at this [link](#).