



Human Rights Council
Thirty-first special session
24 August 2021

**Resolution adopted by the Human Rights Council
on 24 August 2021**

**S-31/1. Strengthening the promotion and protection of human rights in
Afghanistan**

The Human Rights Council,

Guided by the purposes and principles of the Charter of the United Nations, reaffirming the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and recalling the International Covenants on Human Rights and other relevant instruments,

Reaffirming that States have the primary responsibility for the promotion and protection of human rights,

Recognizing that the promotion and protection of human rights should be based on the principles of cooperation and genuine dialogue and aimed at strengthening the capacity of Member States to comply with their human rights obligations,

Reaffirming its strong commitment to the sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity and unity of Afghanistan,

Recalling the obligations of Afghanistan under international human rights covenants and instruments to which it is a State party,

Recalling also the annual reports of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights submitted to the Human Rights Council on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan and technical assistance in the field of human rights, including her report presented to the Council at its forty-sixth session,¹

Recalling further all relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Human Rights Council on the situation in Afghanistan,

Taking note of the recent statements made by the Secretary-General and the High Commissioner, and the joint statements of the special procedures of the Human Rights Council, on reports of human rights violations and abuses in Afghanistan,

Underscoring that a sustainable end to the conflict in Afghanistan can only be achieved through an inclusive, just, durable and realistic political settlement to safeguard and advance respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms of all Afghans,

Recognizing the role and efforts of international and regional partners and the United Nations system in facilitating an inclusive peace and reconciliation process in Afghanistan,

¹ A/HRC/46/69.



Expressing serious concern at reports of violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in the country,

Stressing the need to provide a safe and enabling environment to civil society, journalists, humanitarian actors and health workers to carry out their work,

Expressing deep concern at the displacement in Afghanistan that has caused many Afghan civilians and persons of other nationalities to take refuge in neighbouring and other countries, appreciating the generous hospitality demonstrated by the neighbours of Afghanistan, and urging the international community to assist major refugee-hosting countries to address the refugee problem on the basis of the principle of shared burden and responsibility, particularly given the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, including through the urgent vaccination of all eligible refugees,

Recalling that the current security and humanitarian situation is linked to, inter alia, the prolonged conflict in Afghanistan,

Reaffirming the importance of combating terrorism while fully respecting human rights in Afghanistan, and of ensuring that the territory of Afghanistan is not used to threaten or attack any country, and that no Afghan group or individual supports terrorists operating on the territory of any other country,

Recognizing that terrorism has devastating consequences for the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms of victims and their families, in particular women and girls, deploring the suffering of the people of Afghanistan, and reaffirming its profound solidarity with them while stressing the importance of providing them with proper support and assistance,

Reiterating its unwavering commitment to the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan in accordance with the State's obligations under international human rights law and the Constitution of Afghanistan, and to the promotion and protection of women's full ability to exercise their equal enjoyment of human rights in Afghanistan,

Recognizing that sustainable peace can be achieved only through a comprehensive and inclusive Afghan-led and Afghan-owned political process, with the full and meaningful participation of all Afghans, including persons belonging to ethnic and religious communities and women, that aims at a permanent and comprehensive ceasefire and an inclusive political settlement to end the conflict in Afghanistan,

Recognizing also that accountability for those responsible for human rights violations and abuses in the conflict is one of the central elements of reconciliation and stability within a State and of any effective remedy for victims of human rights violations and abuses, and recognizing further that a fair and effective national justice system, in line with international best practices, is a key factor in ensuring respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms,

Cognizant of the importance of promoting human rights and fundamental freedoms, good governance, the rule of law, democracy and accountability by States in accordance with universal human rights and their constitutional and legal systems,

Considering that the international community, through appropriate platforms, including the Human Rights Council, can play an important and useful role by highlighting violations of international humanitarian law and violations and abuses of human rights in Afghanistan to protect human rights and fundamental freedoms, to help justice and to reduce the risk of further escalation of violence,

1. *Expresses grave concern* at all violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law in Afghanistan;

2. *Calls for* full respect for the human rights of all individuals in Afghanistan, including women, children and persons belonging to ethnic, religious and other minority groups;

3. *Strongly urges* all parties to the conflict to respect their obligations under international law, including international human rights law and international humanitarian law, as applicable, and also urges them to respect the right to liberty of movement and the freedom to leave the country;

4. *Calls for* an immediate ceasefire, and urges all parties to cease violence and to refrain from any action that undermines the rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals in Afghanistan or violates international humanitarian law;

5. *Reaffirms* its support for ongoing efforts aimed at an inclusive and durable political settlement and national reconciliation in Afghanistan, and calls for an inclusive and meaningful peace and reconciliation process that respects human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the full, equal and meaningful participation of women, youth and persons belonging to ethnic, religious and other minority groups, and builds upon the progress made in the past 20 years;

6. *Urges* the international community to remain engaged with an inclusive and representative Afghanistan and its people along political, humanitarian, human rights and development tracks, and calls upon all parties to the conflict to allow immediate, safe and unhindered humanitarian access for United Nations humanitarian agencies and other humanitarian actors, providing assistance, including across conflict lines, to ensure that humanitarian assistance reaches all those in need;

7. *Also urges* the international community, including donors and international humanitarian actors, to provide adequate urgent humanitarian assistance to Afghanistan and major refugee-hosting countries, including with regard to the allocation of COVID-19 vaccines in order to expedite the inoculation of Afghan refugees against the disease;

8. *Stresses* the need for transparent and prompt investigations into reports of all violations and abuses of human rights and violations of international humanitarian law committed by all parties to the conflict, and to hold those responsible to account;

9. *Requests* the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights to present to the Human Rights Council, at its forty-eighth session, an oral update on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan, and to present to the Council, at its forty-ninth session, a comprehensive written report focusing on, inter alia, the accountability of all perpetrators of human rights violations and abuses in the conflict, to be followed by an interactive dialogue;

10. *Decides* to remain seized of the matter.

*2nd meeting
24 August 2021*

[Adopted without a vote.]
