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Afghanistan: Jeddah meeting should protect rights, not sacrifice them

The international meeting of Afghanistan's supporters in Jeddah on 3 March must ensure that human rights, including women's rights, are integral to the reconciliation process in Afghanistan to secure a sustainable and just peace, said Amnesty International today.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference has invited members of the International Contact Group, which brings together the Afghan government with key international states and organizations that provide the Afghan government with financial, military, and political support.

The meeting is seen as significant to recent efforts to pursue peace talks with the Taliban and other anti-government groups.

As the Afghan government and its international partners discuss the political framework for the reintegration and reconciliation process with the Taliban, the organization said that the government must do more to ensure that the negotiations are transparent and inclusive of civil society and especially women.

The Afghan government and its allies frequently describe reconciliation and reintegration as an 'Afghan-led' process but that does not remove Afghanistan's international partners of their responsibilities to ensure that the human rights of the Afghan people are respected, protected and fulfilled, said Amnesty International.

During their repressive era of rule, women bore the brunt of Taliban abuses. Today, in areas under their control, the Taliban have severely curtailed the rights of women and girls. The Afghan government and its international partners must therefore ensure that, in line with UN Security Council Resolution 1325, Afghan women are meaningfully represented in the planning stages and during the reconciliation talks.

Amnesty International urges the Afghan government and its international partners to ensure that any group that joins the government pursuant to reconciliation talks must adhere to Afghanistan's obligations under international human rights law.

Amnesty International also calls upon the Afghan government and its allies to ensure that the reconciliation and reintegration process does not grant official impunity to Taliban and other insurgents responsible for committing war crimes.

Amnesty International calls on the Afghan government and its international allies to ensure that all those who have committed war crimes and other abuses are held to account for their actions—whether insurgents or government forces and their international allies.

Amnesty International has called on the International Criminal Court, to which Afghanistan is a signatory, to investigate war crimes and crimes against humanity in light of the spiraling conflict and the absence of an adequate domestic judicial system.

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