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- You may wish to add quotations from key leaders of your institution, or other supporting content.
- If your institution publishes a solidarity statement, please share it with us! Email us at info@righttolearn.ca
- Thank you for adding your voice to the global solidarity movement standing for the right to education for women in Afghanistan!

Statement of Solidarity With the Women of Afghanistan

[date]

Our [university/faculty/union] community stands in solidarity with the women and girls of Afghanistan, against the denial of their right to education.

We vehemently condemn the Taliban authorities' exclusion of women from higher education in Afghanistan. The ban on women attending any form of higher education, announced on 20 December 2022 and brought into immediate effect on that date, constitutes an abhorrent form of gender persecution that is a crime against humanity, and has no place in 21st century education systems. Secondary education has also been banned for girls in Afghanistan since 2021.

International human rights law protects the right to education for everyone in the world, at all levels, including tertiary education. This right must be upheld and we all have a role to play in speaking out when this right is denied to specific populations.

Denying women the opportunity to study, carry out research, and teach at universities undermines the mission of universities as institutions dedicated to the pursuit of knowledge and scholarship. State-imposed inequities on higher education are antithetical to the very purpose of universities.

Higher education institutions are uniquely positioned to facilitate students' access to credentials, skills training and work experience. Denying women access to these institutions effectively denies them access to lives of choice and opportunity; opportunities that are central to their ability to thrive. In addition to violating women's human rights, this ban will have adverse multi-generational impacts on their families and communities for decades to come. Since August 2021, the Taliban's war on education has reduced women's livelihoods and incomes (and in turn contributed to Afghanistan's economic collapse), resulted in adverse maternal health

outcomes and increased the prevalence of child marriage. Can you imagine what this outright ban will mean for women, their families, communities and the country at large?

We call for an immediate reversal of the ban by the Taliban, and on the international community, all Feminist Foreign Policy countries and those who care about fundamental human rights to take swift and strong action to restore this right.

We salute the courageous women and girls of Afghanistan who are demanding that their right to education be upheld. We draw inspiration from the risks they are taking in protesting the ban on their education, and we declare our unequivocal support for their struggle against repression and discrimination, and for human rights and dignity.