

Afghanistan Diplomatic Alert February 2025

Future Events (February - April 2025)

Doha Process meetings: Special Envoys may meet in February to discuss diplomatic engagement with Afghanistan, focusing on women's rights, humanitarian aid, and international strategies for responding to the Taliban's policies. Working groups on Counter-narcotics and the Private Sector, created in the previous Doha round in July 2024, are currently constituted. The private sector working group met online in January 2025. Non-Taliban participants have not been identified publicly.

ALERT: *Activists can send a consistent message that future Doha Process meetings should be transparently conducted and not continue to exclude civil society participation and human rights topics, as well as diverse perspectives essential for addressing Afghanistan's challenges effectively. Advocates could meet with international diplomats and special envoys to offer diverse views and ensure concerns are heard. Advocates should engage with the UN and international stakeholders, particularly China, Russia, and Iran, to push for a serious and meaningful peace dialogue that prioritizes human rights particularly for women and minorities, and integrates diverse perspectives, including civil society voices.*

Advocacy strategies could include:

- *Encouraging UN special envoys and key stakeholders to involve civil society representatives in working groups.*
- *Proposing mechanisms for monitoring human rights commitments and ensuring accountability.*
- *Highlighting the importance of inclusive dialogue for sustainable solutions in Afghanistan through direct outreach to participating nations.*

UNAMA Mandate Renewal –The UN Security Council's mandate for the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) expires 17 March 2025. Resolution 2727 (2024) emphasizes the importance of UNAMA's continued presence, coordination with stakeholders, and the safety of UN personnel. The Secretary-General reports quarterly on Afghanistan's situation and UNAMA's mandate implementation. The next such meeting will be in mid-March. **ALERT:** *The mandate renewal is the best opportunity to voice concerns or ideas about UNAMA's functions, including the question of whether the mandate or its implementation should be adjusted. The full list of UNAMA's functions is found in paragraph 5 of the mandate from 2022:*

https://unama.unmissions.org/sites/default/files/res_2626_2022_e.pdf

Meanwhile, UNAMA's [quarterly report](#) (October-December 2024) details human rights problems, economic issues, and other problems of Taliban governance, and is available in English, Dari, and Pashtu.

The [Commission on the Status of Women](#) will meet March 10-21, 2025, in New York City. The CSW is sponsored by the Economic and Social Council of the UN General Assembly. The main focus of the session will be the review and appraisal of the implementation of the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action and the full realization of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ***ALERT: Side events on Afghanistan during the CSW will be an opportunity to draw attention gender apartheid and other problems impacting Afghan women.***

Past Events (January 2025 - December 2024)

ICC Prosecutors [Announce Arrest Warrants](#) for Taliban leaders: On January 23, the Office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court announced warrants against the Supreme Leader, Haibatullah Akhundzada, and the de facto Chief Justice, Abdul Hakim Haqqani, for their suspected responsibility for the crime against humanity of gender persecution in Afghanistan.

[US aid pause:](#) The 90-day halt, announced as U.S. President Donald Trump assumed office January 20, aims to “assess aid efficiency and alignment with U.S. foreign policy” and is being applied to refugee resettlement as well as development assistance. On January 22, Jan Egeland, Secretary-General of the Norwegian Refugee Council, warned that the suspension of foreign aid would have catastrophic effects on Afghanistan’s already strained humanitarian operations.

[EU and UNHCR Pledge Funds for Displaced Afghans:](#) On January 17, the EU and UNHCR pledged €36 million as part of a €110 million program (2025-2027) to support displaced Afghans and host communities in Afghanistan, Iran, Pakistan, and Central Asia. The agreement, due to the increasing deportation, will provide protection, education, healthcare, economic opportunities, and all other essential services for refugees, returnees, and internally displaced persons (IDPs). The EU will highly focus on vulnerable groups such as women, children, and people with disabilities through different programs. The programs will provide access to essential services like health and education, as well as protection activities such as registration, access to legal assistance and documentation.

[Bennett calls for Afghan refugee voices in global policy discussions:](#) UN Special Rapporteur Richard Bennett on January 14 called for Afghan refugees' voices to be included in international discussions and policy decisions, during a virtual event hosted by Shahmama. He emphasized respecting refugee rights and urged long-term solutions for Afghan refugees, citing decades of conflict as the root cause of displacement. Bennett also highlighted the challenges faced by Afghan women, girls, and minorities under Taliban rule, driving recent waves of migration. He expressed concern about the economic and social difficulties refugees face in host countries and advocated for burden-sharing mechanisms.

OIC Meeting on Girls Education in Islamabad: On January 11-12, the OIC hosted [a meeting of scholars and Islamic leaders](#) on the issue of education for girls in Islamabad. Over 250 experts attended, although only one person was from

Afghanistan. The Taliban were invited but refused to attend. The meeting statement [] entitled the [Islamabad Declaration on Girls Education in Muslim Communities](#), underscored the vital importance of women's education, and the Secretary General of the Muslim World League pledged to make the Islamabad Declaration a "[constitutional document](#)" of his organization.

Afghanistan's Humanitarian Needs and Response Plan 2025: The UN has an [ongoing funding appeal](#) to aid Afghanistan's persistent crisis with 22.9 million people in need due to economic collapse, rights restrictions, natural disasters, and mass displacement. To address this, humanitarian actors will focus on assisting 16.8 million people with a comprehensive plan that includes:

1. Food Assistance: Addressing food insecurity for 14.8 million people.
2. Healthcare: Expanding maternal, reproductive, and basic health services.
3. Shelter: Providing emergency housing and essentials for displaced populations.
4. Water and Sanitation: Ensuring access to safe water and hygiene supplies.
5. Education: Supporting access to schooling, especially for children.
6. Protection: Offering legal aid, psychosocial support, and safe spaces for vulnerable groups.
7. Cash Support: Delivering cash assistance for immediate and livelihood needs

Five New Members of the Security Council: Pakistan, Denmark, Greece, Panama, and Somalia became non-permanent members of the Security Council for two-year terms starting January 1, 2025, succeeding Ecuador, Japan, Malta, Mozambique, and Switzerland. Pakistan is likely to share responsibility for the Afghanistan portfolio with one or two countries.

UNSC Press Statement on Human Rights: On December 27, members of the UN Security Council issued a strong statement deploring the state of human rights and the economy in Afghanistan. [Joint Statement on Human Rights and the Situation in Afghanistan](#) – Special Envoys and Representatives for Afghanistan of Canada, the European Union, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, Norway, the Republic of Korea, Switzerland, Türkiye, the United Kingdom, and the United States met in Geneva on December 16, 2024, with UNAMA, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC), and the World Bank, to address Afghanistan's humanitarian and security challenges. The group expressed concern over the Taliban's escalating restrictions on women and girls, including the recent ban on women's medical training, and called for the immediate reversal of these discriminatory policies. They highlighted the ongoing threat of terrorism in Afghanistan, urging the Taliban to fully comply with UN Resolution 2593 to address groups like ISIS-K and other terrorist organizations still operating freely in the country. The statement called for an inclusive political system and emphasized the vital role of NGOs in supporting vulnerable populations and encouraged regional cooperation to address threats like terrorism and migration. The participants encouraged deeper regional cooperation to address threats such as terrorism and illegal migration and commended the ongoing efforts of the UN, UNAMA, and various humanitarian actors in mitigating Afghanistan's social and humanitarian crises.

No Tax Dollars for Terrorists Act: In December 2023, Congressman Tim Burchett introduced H.R. 6586 to prevent U.S. financial and material support from reaching the Taliban, following reports of \$40 million weekly cash shipments to Afghanistan's Central Bank and \$10 million in taxes paid to the Taliban. Although H.R. 6586 passed the House unanimously, it was blocked in the Senate. In January 2025, Burchett introduced an improved version, the "No Tax Dollars for Terrorists Act" (H.R. 260), which mandates the State Department to develop policies to prevent aid from reaching the Taliban, requires reports on cash assistance programs and safeguards, and calls for transparency regarding the Afghan Fund and Central Bank. The bill responds to ongoing concerns over U.S. aid misuse, highlighted by a SIGAR report on inadequate safeguards and alleged Taliban benefits from U.S. funds.

UN Security Council Extends Sanctions Monitoring Team for Afghanistan – On December 13, the U.N. Security Council unanimously extended the mandate of the sanctions monitoring team for Afghanistan by 14 months, maintaining the work of the team that monitors the implementation and impact of sanctions against the Taliban, including asset freezes, travel bans, and an arms embargo. U.S. and other representatives welcomed the resolution, calling it crucial for Afghanistan's stability and urging rigorous enforcement to ensure its effectiveness in countering threats to peace and security.

UN Security Council Meeting on Afghanistan – The UN Security Council held its quarterly session on Afghanistan on December 12. At that meeting, Ecuador's Deputy Permanent Representative cited a monitoring report revealing key Taliban figures' involvement in drug production and trafficking. Iran's representative raised concerns over the growing presence of Daesh and al-Qaeda, criticizing the Taliban's restrictions on women for worsening the humanitarian crisis and urged political reforms and action against narcotics production. Roza Otunbayeva, head of UNAMA, emphasized that Taliban restrictions on women working with national and international organizations severely hinder humanitarian efforts, calling for strong advocacy and mitigation. Tom Fletcher, Under-Secretary-General for Humanitarian Affairs and Emergency Relief Coordinator, warned of Afghanistan's escalating poverty, food insecurity, and healthcare collapse, urging urgent action to safeguard millions' survival. China's envoy highlighted global security threats from Afghan-based terrorist groups, advocating for international unity. Afghanistan civil society was represented by Roya Mahboob, who criticized the exclusion of women from Taliban envoy talks, linking it to gender apartheid and broader peace and security issues.

CSTO Meeting in Moscow; Russian Law on Delisting Terror Groups– On December 12th, The CSTO's Afghanistan Working Group met in Moscow and highlighted that terrorist threats to member states primarily originate from Afghanistan. Representatives from the UN, Shanghai Cooperation Organization, and other bodies attended. Discussions focused on regional security challenges posed by Afghan-based terrorist groups, underscoring collective efforts to address cross-border threats and maintain stability in Central Asia. Meanwhile, on December 17, the

[Russian legislature passed a law](#) allowing the government to de-list terrorist organizations, including the Taliban, which could pave the way for diplomatic recognition.

Joint Civil Society Statement on the Rollback of Women's Rights in Afghanistan under Taliban Rule

On December 9, through the Rawadari organization, multiple feminist organizations expressed solidarity with Afghan women and girls facing severe rights rollbacks under the Taliban since August 2021. They demanded urgent international action to address these violations. Their demands include:

1. **Support for Afghan Women and Girls:** Governments and regional organizations must pressure the Taliban to restore women's access to education, employment, freedom of movement, and other fundamental rights.
2. **Inclusion in Decision-Making:** Afghan women must have full participation in peace and political settlements; excluding them undermines legitimacy.
3. **Safe Passage for Asylum Seekers:** Countries must keep borders open to Afghan refugees, especially women and children, ensuring asylum and resettlement options.
4. **Freedom of Expression:** Protect freedom of expression for journalists, with a focus on women journalists facing threats and living in precarious conditions in exile. Preserve independent Afghan media.
5. **Support for Women Human Rights Defenders:** Increase funding and resources to protect and empower Afghan women.
6. **Recognition of Gender Apartheid:** Codify gender apartheid as an international crime to combat systemic oppression, especially in Afghanistan.
7. **Support for Accountability:** Encourage legal action against Afghanistan for violating the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) at the International Court of Justice (ICJ).