



Women living under muslim laws
النساء في ظل قوانين المسلمين
Femmes sous lois musulmanes

Transnational Solidarity Network

**Women Living Under Muslim Laws in solidarity with the women of Afghanistan on
International Women's Day, 8 March 2021**

On International Women's Day, Women Living Under Muslims Laws (WLUMML) calls on governments to uphold the rights of women in Afghanistan. The people of Afghanistan are determined to ensure peace, however, this should not come at the cost of women's constitutional rights and the reversal of gains made in law and civil society by women since the fall of the Taliban in 2001.

Despite calls for a ceasefire, outspoken women continue to be the target of assassinations. Last week, 2 March 2021, Shahnaz Raufi, Mursal Waheedi and Saadia Sadat, three women working in the media in Afghanistan, were killed. A few days ago, Sadaaf Elyasi, a female doctor, was also killed on her way to work. And last month, two female Supreme Court judges, Zakieh Herawi and Qadria Yasini, were assassinated by gunmen. It is therefore clear that targeted violence has increased despite representatives from the Afghan government and the Taliban holding peace talks in Qatar. Women Living Under Muslim laws strongly condemns these attacks and extends our condolences to the families of the women.

These events have realised fears that women's rights are being surrendered without guarantees in the US agreed peace process with the Taliban, and in exchange for a swift withdrawal of US forces for domestic political gains. In response, WLUMML together with the women of Afghanistan have launched the campaign 'No Peace without Women's Rights in Afghanistan'. It is essential that women are represented at the peace talks in considerable number to give voice to the demands of half the population. There is no evidence the Taliban have reversed their extreme approach to women's rights and their return to power will have severe consequences, not only in Afghanistan, as other fundamentalist groups will interpret this as a vindication of their regressive gender ideologies.

We therefore urge governments on International Women's Day to:

1. Ensure an immediate and complete ceasefire
2. Ensure meaningful and substantive participation of women in accordance with UN Resolution 1325
3. Ensure the Afghanistan peace agreement reiterates that all citizens are equal before the law, regardless of gender, ethnicity or religion

Finally, we would like to share 'Bread and Roses', a feminist song of protest and determination for change, in support of the women of Afghanistan. We hope that today, on International Women's Day, they are heard: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=94mSln34ZwA>.

For further information on the threat to women's rights and female activists please read: <https://theconversation.com/women-in-afghanistan-worry-peace-accord-with-taliban-extremists-could-cost-them-hard-won-rights-154149>

In solidarity,

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