



## Press Release

### Women Regional Network and Women Advocacy Committee on Recent Peace Dialogue

5<sup>th</sup> September 2019

Kabul, Afghanistan

Afghanistan is again in a critical situation. The peace negotiation process between the Taliban and US has led to wide-spread insecurity and enhanced fears among the Afghan people as they know nothing about the content of the so-called Peace Agreement. Afghan's future is being negotiated without the inclusion of the Afghan people.

The Women's Regional Network and the Women's Advocacy Committee express serious concerns that the US Special Representative to these talks, Ambassador Khalilzad, has put the hard won gains of the Afghan women in jeopardy. No one has suffered more at the hands of the Taliban than the women of Afghanistan. However, Afghan women have made enormous strides since the Taliban Government was overthrown in 2001 by US forces. Women's rights are now protected in

the Afghan Constitution giving them equality in every respect including the right to vote, along with the right to access education, justice and health care.

Increasing violence, terrorist attacks, and the massacre of Afghan citizens in the past few weeks has led to unspeakable suffering by the Afghan people-- all while the US is in the final phase of an agreement with the Taliban on the withdrawal of American troops. There is now widespread fear in the broader society that a precipitous deal with the Taliban could usher in a civil war.

Therefore, for mitigation of further vulnerability of women, and preservation of civic and human rights achievements in peace dialogue, we are proposing the followings:

1. The Afghanistan Constitution is not negotiable. The rights enshrined in the Afghan Constitution protect women and all Afghan citizens with the basic rights of citizenship in a democratic society. This was achieved with the support of the international community, particularly the US. It is paramount that the US, as a beacon of democracy in the world today, preserves these achievements.
2. An immediate and countrywide ceasefire is an essential condition of any Peace Agreement the US President signs, so the Afghan people can trust that a Peace Agreement is truly that.
3. Full transparency of the details of any peace agreement is the right of the Afghan people. Details of this Agreement must be released to the Afghan people immediately.
4. Qualified women must be ensured an essential role in the in peace negotiations. Peace is not possible if the rights of half the Afghan population, whose talents and contributions are vital to the future of Afghanistan, are abrogated.
5. Establishment of an oversight body, comprising representatives of the United Nations, representatives of the United States and the NATO countries in Afghanistan, to monitor the peace process during peace negotiations and after the signing of the Peace Agreement.

**We want peace with justice!**