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ORAL STATEMENT
Item 6
Consideration of UPR reports: [Afghanistan]

UN Human Rights Council
57th session
09 September – 11 October 2024

Mr. President,

Afghanistan's UPR paints a grim picture of a catastrophic human rights situation. Impunity for crimes under international law and other serious human rights violations, particularly those implicating Taliban members, prevails.

The UPR mechanism can provide a record of Afghanistan's performance on human rights. That said, a tangible and robust avenue towards accountability is gravely needed to hold the perpetrators of grave violations accountable and to deliver justice for victims.

Three years after the Taliban's return to power, the Taliban has dismantled human rights institutions and mechanisms and suspended or abolished formerly existing laws; protestors and other groups criticizing the Taliban's draconian actions continue to be arbitrarily detained, tortured, forcibly disappeared and imprisoned following unfair trials. The Taliban have extrajudicially executed dozens of former security and government officials¹, persecuted religious and ethnic minorities and LGBTI people, have routinely used torture and other ill-treatment and brought back the practice of corporal punishment. Flogging women and men across the country has become the order of the day². The Taliban has also imposed widespread, draconian restrictions on the rights of women and girls, resulting in the erasure of women and girls from all spheres of public life.

The return of the Taliban in Afghanistan has blocked all possible domestic avenues for justice and accountability. The absence of an effective international response has emboldened them to advance on a more regressive path.

This has exacerbated a deeply rooted culture of impunity in Afghanistan where four decades of violent conflict and instability have failed to provide justice to the victims and survivors. We

¹ <https://news.un.org/en/story/2023/08/1139962>

² <https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/08/afghanistan-three-years-of-taliban-rule-and-international-inaction-have-left-afghan-community-with-little-hope/>

welcome recommendations made seeking the establishment of an independent investigative mechanism, and we call on member states to use all available avenues to support the protection and promotion of human rights in Afghanistan. This includes working towards urgently establishing such an independent international accountability mechanism to investigate, collect and preserve evidence with a view to supporting future accountability efforts.

We also encourage member states to expand their engagement with and protection of the Afghan human rights community, especially women human rights defenders and activists.

Thank you.