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The humanitarian and human rights crisis in Afghanistan should not be forgotten

Today, Members of the European Parliament will vote on a resolution on the Situation in Afghanistan, in particular the situation of women's rights. The situation has increasingly worsened since the Taliban takeover last year, with close to 25 million people currently in need of humanitarian aid and repression against women and girls has tightened. The Greens/EFA call for a strong and joint response to the ongoing humanitarian and human rights crisis.

Tineke Strik MEP, Greens/EFA shadow rapporteur of the resolution on the situation in Afghanistan, in particular the situation of women's rights and member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, comments:

“Afghan people are living through an absolute nightmare. The Taliban takeover has made the lives of all Afghans extremely dire, and the crisis has been deepened by the drought, the pandemic, the indirect impact of international sanctions and the overwhelming level of food insecurity. Women and girls are facing particularly difficult conditions under Taliban rule.

“The EU must maintain its strict conditional engagement with the Taliban and avoid any normalisation of relations. We call for a review of sanctions, ensuring that these do not undermine the basic rights of Afghan people. The EU should create alternative ways to reach the population and step up humanitarian aid. We call upon the High Representative and the Commission to step up EU coordination for evacuation of the Afghan human rights defenders who wish to leave, and to press Member States to enhance their visa and resettlement policies, as well as a clear safe passage to our embassies and the European Union. We must invest in protection of Afghan refugees in neighbouring countries. Our solidarity with Ukrainian refugees has shown that we have the capacity to welcome and protect those in need. Let's make sure every refugee has the same rights.”

Hannah Neumann MEP, Vice-Chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Human Rights, comments:

“We can no longer ignore the fact that women's rights in Afghanistan continue to be eroded. Women and girls suffer most from the lack of basic health care and the current famine and are particularly dependent on humanitarian aid. The Taliban de facto authorities have publicly pledged to respect women's rights after taking power, but as it now turns out, those were nothing but empty words: girls continue to be excluded from school, activists have to go into hiding and families are torn apart.

“Civil disobedience is on the rise in Afghanistan. Brave women and girls are protesting for their right to

education and are organising their resistance against Taliban oppression. As the Greens/EFA Group, we are calling on member states' governments to act now on their promises and coordinate the evacuation of those who need to leave and support those who want to stay with a fund. We have a responsibility towards all Afghan women and girls, and we must not abandon them."

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