



Alliance for Peacebuilding

The Alliance for Peacebuilding Urges the U.S. Government Not to Sacrifice Afghan Women's Hard-Won Freedoms in Service of Political Expediency

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Washington, DC—The Biden-Harris Administration's [proposed roadmap](#) to advance the stalled Afghan peace process was recently revealed. However, the [Alliance for Peacebuilding](#) (AfP) is extremely concerned the United States' efforts to expedite an intra-Afghan settlement will result in the de-prioritization of women's rights and their meaningful participation in the peace process. This marginalization could lead to their freedoms, agency, and lives being negotiated away in service of a flawed and, ultimately, unsustainable peace agreement.

AfP calls on the Biden-Harris Administration to immediately leverage U.S. development and security assistance to elevate women's roles in all levels of decision-making throughout the next steps of the process and beyond. AfP further calls on Congress to closely monitor U.S. engagement to ensure the Administration is fulfilling its obligations as required by the [Women, Peace, and Security Act of 2017](#).

Since the [agreement](#) between the Taliban and the Trump Administration in February 2020, the intra-Afghan talks between the Afghan government and the Taliban have been [unproductive](#). The U.S. "[roadmap for the peace process](#)" and urgent tone of Secretary of State Blinken's [letter](#) to President Ghani seek to unblock the logjam between the parties. This framework outlines guiding principles for: (1) Afghanistan's Constitution and state structure; (2) a transitional government; and (3) a comprehensive, permanent ceasefire.

Alarming, however, women's rights are being sidelined once again, heightening concerns the proposed [interim government, power-sharing arrangement, and constitutional reform](#) will facilitate a reversion to brutal Taliban rule and the reinstatement of its dangerous interpretation of Sharia Law. The roadmap calls for the future Constitution to guarantee the protection of women's rights—the current Constitution does this already. It also calls on the parties to give "special consideration for the meaningful inclusion of women" throughout the interim government without defining that terminology, establishing quotas, or codifying other opportunities for women's participation.

The gender inequality, domestic violence, and discrimination that skyrocketed during the Taliban reign led to Afghanistan's consistent ranking as one of the [worst places in the world](#) to be a woman. Since the 2001 intervention, which the U.S. partially [predicated](#) on releasing them from the repressive grip of the Taliban, Afghan women and girls have made [tremendous gains](#). Yet, the lack of priority on women's rights and inclusion throughout the peace process and in this recent



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proposal demonstrates the [precarious position](#) in which Afghan women and girls remain. The U.S. must utilize all available levers of influence to protect the hard-won gains of Afghan women.

With over 130 member organizations, AfP brings together the largest development organizations, most innovative academic institutions, and influential humanitarian and faith-based groups to harness collective action for peace. We build coalitions in key areas of strategy and policy to elevate the entire peacebuilding field, tackling issues too large for any one organization to address alone.