**Rise with Afghan Women**

Background:

The Taliban seized control in August 2021 following the withdrawal of US forces. Since then, Afghanistan has been in a downward spiral of human rights violations. The Taliban have dismantled institutions like the Ministry of Women’s Affair, Afghanistan Independent Human Rights Commission, Attorney General Office and all gender and human rights focused units aimed to support women and girls.

Women and girls have been banned from attending secondary school and higher education. Afghanistan is now the only country in the world to restricts access to education for girls past the age of 12. Women are restricted from working in the majority of sectors and as a result many families have been plunged into poverty. Girls are being forced into dangerous, unequal marriages to help ease the financial strain their families are facing.

A “vice and virtue law” has banned women’s voices from being heard in public and prevents women without mahram (male chaperones) from using transport. “Morality inspectors” (police) are empowered to threaten and detain individuals who violate this morality code. There have been reports of women detainees being sexually abused and assaulted by the Taliban.

The Taliban have dismissed allegations of gender persecution and claim they are complying with Sharia (Islamic law) and ‘Afghan culture.’ Amnesty International has documented that the Taliban’s draconian restrictions on the fundamental rights of women and girls, together with the widespread use of arbitrary detention, enforced disappearance, torture and other ill-treatment, may amount to the crime against humanity of [gender persecution](https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2024/07/afghanistan-new-un-report-stresses-urgent-need-for-taliban-to-roll-back-on-moral-policing/).

Find out more about Amnesty Feminist ‘Rise With Afghan Women’ campaign [here](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/rwaw).

Write to your MP

Find out who your elected Member of Parliament is, and information about them, their voting history, and their contact details [here](https://www.theyworkforyou.com/mps/).

Letter template:

[Insert Name and Address]

[Insert Date]

**RE: UK GOVERNMENT COMMITMENT TO WOMEN AND GIRLS IN AFGHANISTAN**

 Dear [Title and Name],

I am writing to you today, due to my growing concern for the situation on the ground in Afghanistan.

[INSERT PERSONAL/LOCAL CONTEXT - why is it important to you and your local community? Are there local Charities or community groups that are affected? Do you have members of the Afghan diaspora in your community?

I wanted to acknowledge the UK Government’s continued support for Afghan women and girls, as well as that of previous Governments. In particular, I was pleased to see statements from the UK at the UN Security Council in September last year in response to the “vice and virtue” law issued by the Taliban.

I would also like to share with you Amnesty International’s [research](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/), highlighting how the Taliban de facto authorities continue to commit human rights violations and crimes under international law against the Afghan people, especially women and girls.

Amnesty International carried out consultations with 150 individuals covering a range of stakeholders including Afghan human rights defenders, members of academia, women protestors and activists, young people, civil society representatives and journalists who are currently residing inside Afghanistan or are in exile, who overwhelmingly believe that the international community has failed the people of Afghanistan. Not only have they failed to hold the Taliban accountable for the crimes and human rights violations, they have also failed to come up with a strategic direction to prevent any further harm.

As I am sure you know, Australia, Canada, Germany, and the Netherlands announced at the 2024 UN General Assembly, that they will initiate legal proceedings, that could ultimately lead to action at the International Court of Justice against Afghanistan for numerous violations of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). This is an important step towards international accountability, and I was pleased to read that the UK has pledged its political support in the case. But the UK must do more, and I urge you to use your platform and influence to stand up for the people of Afghanistan. The UK can play a leading role to prevent further abuses and hold the Taliban accountable.

Additionally, Afghan women have been campaigning for recognition of [‘Gender Apartheid’](https://endgenderapartheid.today/index.php) under international law, in order to strengthen efforts to combat institutionalized regimes of systematic oppression on the grounds of gender and hold the Taliban accountable.

On August 15 2025, we mark the fourth anniversary of the Taliban’s takeover, and the devastating impact this had had on the country. Please can you use every opportunity available – through parliamentary questions, speaking in debates, writing to the Prime Minister directly, to ask:

1. What is the UK Government currently doing to protect the rights of women and girls in Afghanistan

2. Is the UK Government planning to formally join Canada, Australia, Germany and the Netherlands case at the International Court of Justice?

3. How will the UK Government formally support the [campaign to](https://endgenderapartheid.today/index.php) codify Gender Apartheid under international law?

Thank you for your kind attention on this matter.

Yours sincerely,