



# General Assembly

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## Human Rights Council

Thirty-fourth session

Agenda item 3

**Promotion and protection of all human rights, civil,  
political, economic, social and cultural rights,  
including the right to development**

### **Written statement\* submitted by the Organization for Defending Victims of Violence, a non-governmental organization in special consultative status**

The Secretary-General has received the following written statement which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

[11 February 2017]


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\* This written statement is issued, unedited, in the language(s) received from the submitting non-governmental organization(s).

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## **Afghanistan and the Continued Human Sufferings**

### **For Enhanced ID on migrants**

With the dawn of 2017, the world is still riddled with war and conflict, refugee crisis and terrorism. Extremism that has come as a result of wrong policies has escalated countless human crises. Today's human crises do not solely originate in domestic political problems.

As one of the focal points of today's global crises, Afghanistan is faced with complex human problems. Over the recent years and with the escalation of the Middle East crisis in the Syrian Arab Republic and Iraq, Afghanistan and its problems seem to have been forgotten, something that unfortunately will have dangerous repercussions for Mankind, in the event of being left unnoticed. The escalation of clashes and increase in terror attacks, particularly over the last year, has diminished hopes for the reconstruction of Afghanistan.

With the re-strengthening of the Taliban in parts of Afghanistan over the last year, and the new waves of attacks against civilians and government forces, we are witnessing the strengthening of ISIS in parts of the country. With the weakening of its bases in Syria and Iraq, ISIS now is trying to find refuge in Afghanistan, and increases its activities on a daily basis. And in the event of an ISIS victory in the country, for certain we shall see days darker than Taliban control, for the people of Afghanistan. This human crisis has dangerous dimensions three important ones of which are: the expansion of the infiltration of ISIS and the Taliban, spreading of sectarian violence, worsening of the people's income and economic situation, new wave of Afghan people's displacement internally and asylum abroad, and escalation of violence against civilians, women and children in particular. These issues which are connected to each other, will cause the worsening of human crises in the future, if left unchecked.

With the passage of 16 years since the arrival of international forces in Afghanistan, the actions of ISIS and the Taliban have hampered any effort for the development of country. In 2015 the Afghan interior Ministry announced that over 7180 foreign nationals are fighting for extremist groups in the country. New groups associated to Al-Qaeda, the Taliban and more recently ISIS have started a new wave of violence gains the people of the country. The UN states that 70 percent of all the killings in Afghanistan are done by these extremist groups, groups that do not shy away from committing war crimes and crimes against humanity, crimes such as planting mines and suicide attacks. The Afghan government is in control of only 63 percent of the country, and the rest is in the control of extremist groups.<sup>1</sup>

From the beginning of 2015, Afghanistan saw the infiltration of ISIS within its borders and another crisis was added to the human crises of the country. With the establishment of a province in Afghanistan, ISIS is in pursuit of an authority even more terrifying than the Taliban and commit the same atrocities it commits in Iraq and Syria; a danger which if ignored will turn into another Syrian crisis for the world. ISIS operations in July 2016 and suicide attack on demonstrators in Kabul left 80 people dead. Another attack on a Shia Mosque in Kabul in November, left another 40 dead. In the eastern parts of Afghanistan villagers who put up resistance against ISIS and the Taliban are threatened, killed and their homes are destroyed and there is violence against their women and children.

The initial inability of ISIS to fight the central government, has drawn this terror group towards attacking the Hezareh and Shia minorities and the Taliban in the country. The Interior Ministry of the National Unity government deems the Shia and the Taliban as the first targets of ISIS in Afghanistan.<sup>2</sup>

Afghan youths do not join militant groups because of Islamic ideology or having the beliefs of extremist groups, they join to make a living and escape poverty and hunger, and or fear for their and their families' lives. In it's less than a

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.amnesty.org/ar/countries/asia-and-the-pacific/afghanistan/report-afghanistan/>

<sup>2</sup> <http://www.khaama.com/isis-still-psing-serious-threats-to-afghanistan-sediq-02718>

year presence in Afghanistan, ISIS makes its recruits from Taliban fighters. With large payment of money, ISIS is trying to get recruits from all across Afghanistan, but fortunately despite the bad job conditions of the country it has not managed to get the people to join. Nonetheless, with the increase in economic pressures on the people and failure in the provision of the basic needs in life, the probability of more poor people joining ISIS is increasing.

The power struggles between militant groups has hurt the economy and agriculture of the country. ISIS efforts to take territories away from the Taliban has been directed to poppy farms. Currently approximately 1 billion dollars is made from poppy plantations and opium trafficking each year by the Taliban, which can alter the war economy of Afghanistan.<sup>3</sup>

The displacement and refugee crisis will be a direct result of such a situation. According to UNCHR figures, there are 3 million Afghan refugees around the world, and another one million are internally displaced. With the start of the reconstruction of the country there was hope that the wave of displacement and asylum seeking would reduce in Afghanistan, but sadly war, and the extremist groups getting stronger has increased the displacement problems in the country.

The internally displaced in Afghanistan are in worse conditions than Afghan refugees around the world. Lack of shelter, poverty, hunger, and diseases threaten the lives of thousands of people. The number of the displaced has tripled between the years 2014 and 2016, and six times more compared to 2012. Therefore according to UN estimates, in 2017 we shall see an increase of 450,000 internally displaced people.

Furthermore, the escalation of violence against women is the direct result of the conflict and insecurity in Afghanistan. Sixteen years since the Taliban regime in Afghanistan, the culture of violence against women has taken root, and due to factors such as extremist mindsets and economic and cultural poverty, the violence continues. Despite the government and civil society institution's efforts in Afghanistan, women and subsequently children suffer from numerous damages. Now with the escalation of ISIS attacks, concerns have increased on the escalation of violence in the country.<sup>4</sup> The interweaving of human sufferings with the presence of extremist militants in Afghanistan, makes finding solutions for peace and reduction of violence in the country difficult.

ODVV makes the following recommendations for improvement of situation in Afghanistan:

The fight against ISIS and the Taliban is the main solution for solving the human crisis in Afghanistan. We recommend the UN and neighbouring countries to adopt a comprehensive approach that includes cultural, political and economic dimensions, and make a new attempt to fight extremism in the region.

Now, the changing of the views towards migrants and refugees in political systems and public opinion is necessary. The treatment that we see refugees, foreigners, Muslims and migrants receive by some groups and governments in the world, is clearly the other side of the coin of extremism. Thus, for the purpose of special attention being paid to the issue, we recommend the UN Human Rights Council to hold an annual "Migration" Conference with the participation of the Special Rapporteurs on Internally Displaced Persons and Minority Issues, with the aim of focus on the social and economic dimensions of migration.

Investment in the economic development of Afghanistan is one of the crucial necessities for the reduction of tendencies towards extremism. Furthermore, the improvement of environment will reduce the damages of illegal economic activities. Thus we recommend the UNDP to launch a new programme for small and early jobs in the country to reduce poverty in the short run.

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<sup>4</sup> [www.ohchr.com](http://www.ohchr.com) and [www.irinnews.org](http://www.irinnews.org)

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