



انجمن مستقل وکلای مدافع افغانستان در تبعید

په تبعید کی دمدافع وکیلانو خپلواکه ټولنه

Afghanistan Independent Bar Association in Exile

Statement of the Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile

on the Occasion of World Refugee Day

Brussels, June 20, 2026

On the occasion of World Refugee Day, the Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile expresses its solidarity with millions of refugees, displaced persons, and uprooted people around the world, particularly Afghan refugees. The Association also expresses its deep concern regarding the difficult circumstances and uncertain future of hundreds of thousands of Afghan citizens who are living in various countries in search of security, safety, freedom, and a life of dignity.

World Refugee Day comes at a time when millions of Afghan citizens have been forced to leave their homeland following the Taliban's return to power. They did not choose to leave voluntarily; rather, they were compelled to flee due to fear of political repression, retaliation, widespread human rights violations, and deprivation of fundamental freedoms, structural discrimination, security threats, and the collapse of prospects for a dignified human life. Despite several years having passed since the Taliban regained control of Afghanistan, the country's human rights and security situation remains deeply alarming. Women and girls have been deprived of their most basic human and civil rights, civil society and political activists continue to face threats and repression, freedom of expression and media freedoms have been severely restricted, and many Afghan citizens remain exposed to serious risks.

In such circumstances, the Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile is increasingly concerned by the expansion of restrictive and anti-immigration policies in certain European countries and other parts of the world. The adoption of stricter migration and asylum laws, growing pressure on asylum seekers, limitations on access to legal protections, and the intensification of deportation measures have generated serious concerns within the Afghan refugee community.

We are particularly concerned about the increasing trend of returning Afghan nationals from certain European countries, including Germany. Recent reports and developments indicate that, in order to facilitate the deportation and return of Afghan migrants, contacts and discussions have taken place between some European governments and the de facto authorities in Afghanistan.

This situation reveals a clear legal and ethical contradiction. The same governments that describe the human rights situation in Afghanistan as critical and refuse to formally recognize the Taliban are, at the same time, compelled to engage and coordinate in practice with the very structure that has been the primary cause of the flight of millions of Afghan citizens.

The Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile emphasizes that the return of individuals who have fled their country due to fear of persecution, political prosecution, security threats, human rights violations, and pressures arising from Taliban rule cannot be regarded merely as an administrative or migration issue. Rather, it is a matter directly related to human life, liberty, security, and dignity.

The Afghanistan Independent Bar Association (AIBA) in exile seeks to preserve the identity of the AIBA and its members, while safeguarding the achievements made over the past 20 years. It is committed to providing legal services to lawyers and defending the rights of citizens, with a particular focus on protecting the rights of women.

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Pursuant to Article 33 of the 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the fundamental principle of **non-refoulement** obliges states not to return any person to a country where their life, liberty, or security may be threatened on account of political opinions, religious beliefs, ethnic identity, gender, civil activities, or other similar grounds. This principle constitutes one of the cornerstones of international refugee law and is a well-established norm of international law.

Accordingly, any policy or measure that results in the forced return of Afghan asylum seekers and refugees to a country that still lacks the necessary legal, political, and security guarantees may be inconsistent with states' international obligations under human rights and refugee law.

We also express our deep concern regarding efforts to normalize cooperation with the Taliban on the issue of migrant returns. No agreement or implementation mechanism should become a tool for disregarding the actual human rights situation in Afghanistan or for sacrificing the rights of refugees in favor of political or electoral considerations.

The Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile calls upon the European Union, the Government of Germany, other European Union Member States, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the United Nations Human Rights Council, and all relevant institutions to:

1. Fully respect the principle of non-refoulement and refrain from any forced deportation of Afghan asylum seekers and refugees.
2. Base all decisions concerning the return of Afghan nationals on the actual human rights situation in Afghanistan.
3. Refrain from any agreement or cooperation that could endanger the security, freedom, and human dignity of returnees.
4. Maintain asylum procedures that are fair, transparent, and based on individualized assessments of each case.
5. Strengthen legal, social, and humanitarian support for Afghan refugees.
6. Expand sustainable solutions for resettlement and support for vulnerable individuals.

On World Refugee Day, we reaffirm that asylum is a fundamental human right. Afghan refugees are not criminals; they are victims of war, extremism, political repression, and widespread human rights violations. The international community bears both a moral and legal responsibility to protect these individuals and to prevent them from becoming victims of injustice once again.

On this day, the Afghanistan Independent bar Association in Exile honors the voices of all Afghan refugees living in camps, reception centers, host countries, or uncertain legal circumstances. We call upon the international community not to sacrifice humanitarian values, international commitments, and the fundamental principles of human rights to political considerations and pressures arising from anti-immigration policies. For Media Inquiries, Contact:

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