Position Paper — Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Committee: United Nations Human Rights Council UNHRC
Topic: Addressing the Institutionalization of Gender-Based Discrimination in Afghanistan: Examining the Recognition of "Gender Apartheid", Accountability Mechanisms and the International Community's Responsibility to Protect Fundamental Rights
Delegation: Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan

Since the Taliban's takeover in August 2021, women and girls in Afghanistan have seen more rights taken away than in any other country in the world. They have been thrown out of schools and universities. Women have been pushed out of their jobs. Women are barred from parks andgyms. No girl is allowed in secondary school. A woman cannot step out in public without a male guardian, and she cannot travel without a man. In 2024 the Taliban brought in a new "vice and virtue" law that in effect bans women from public space altogether. Afghanistan today is the onlycountry in the world where girls are denied secondary education.

Jordan does not recognise the Taliban government, and Jordan has stated clearly, along with the rest of the international community, that these actions run contrary to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women CEDAW and to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

Jordan's position rests on three points:

1. Women's rights cannot be written off as culture. Jordan recognises the sovereignty and cultural identity of every nation, but denying half a population education, work and public space cannot be treated as an internal matter. Jordan, as a Muslim country, states plainly that these restrictions have no basis in Islamic teaching. Many Islamic scholars, and the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation as well, have said the same thing.
2. Engagement has to be conditional. Jordan supports humanitarian aid to the people of Afghanistan through UN bodies, and believes that aid must continue. But Jordan does not support any move to normalise relations with, or recognise, the Taliban without clear, measurable and verifiable progress on girls' education and on women's employment. Aid continues; legitimacy cannot come at a discount.
3. Responsibility has to be shared. Jordan has hosted generations of refugees from Palestine, Iraq and Syria, and knows the burden of hosting people well. The Afghan refugee situation needs to be treated as a joint international responsibility, especially for the immediate neighbouring countries. Jordan calls on the international community to fund education and livelihood programmes for Afghan women and girls now living in exile.

Recommendations:

• Conditional recognition framework: Any recognition of the Taliban should come with clear, time-bound requirements — reopening girls' secondary schools, allowing women to work in health and education, and restoring women's freedom of movement.
• Education as a lifeline: Expand cross-border and online education so Afghan girls can keep studying despite the domestic ban, with international funding and regional countries hosting the programmes.
• Targeted sanctions with humanitarian carve-outs: Sanction those responsible for gender-based persecution while keeping humanitarian corridors open.
• Documentation and accountability: Support the ICC and UN mechanisms in gathering evidence of gender-based persecution, and support the recognition of gender apartheid under international law.
• Women at the table: No negotiation on Afghanistan's future should go ahead without Afghan women in the room, including women from the diaspora.

Jordan reaffirms that the rights of Afghan women and girls are a matter of principle, not convenience. Jordan is ready to work with all member states, regional partners and UN agencies so that Afghan women are not left in silence, and so that the international community's words are matched by consequences.