

**Statement delivered by H.E. Ambassador YAMAZAKI Kazuyuki,  
Permanent Representative of Japan to the United Nations, at Joint Press Stakeout of  
12 Security Council Members, on the situation in Afghanistan**

We, the Security Council members that have a strong interest in the human rights situation in Afghanistan -Ecuador, France, Guyana, Malta, Mozambique, Republic of Korea, Sierra Leone, Slovenia, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States, and my own country Japan- have come together today to express our deep concern about the so-called “morality law” which was announced by the Taliban recently.

We condemn in the strongest terms the Taliban’s continued systemic gender discrimination and oppression of women and girls in Afghanistan. On top of the existing edicts, this new directive confirms and extends wide-ranging and far-reaching restrictions on personal conduct and provides inspectors with broad powers of enforcement, thus deepening the already unacceptable restrictions on the enjoyment by all Afghans of human rights and fundamental freedoms. It is raising further serious concerns among all Afghan citizens as it will negatively impact many areas of their lives.

The Security Council has discussed the dire human rights situation in Afghanistan since the Taliban’s takeover three years ago, and has raised a united voice on multiple occasions. Among others, the Council unanimously adopted Resolution 2681 in April 2023 to call for the full, equal, meaningful and safe participation of women and girls in Afghanistan.

Today, we once again urge the Taliban to swiftly reverse all the policies and practices that restrict the enjoyment by women and girls of their human rights and fundamental freedoms. The Taliban need to listen and respond to the voices of Afghan women and girls by respecting their rights to education and for women, to work as well as the freedoms of expression and movement. It is a prerequisite for a stable, peaceful and prosperous Afghanistan.

We also urge all States and organizations to use their influence, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, to promote an urgent reversal of these policies and practices. We would like to stress that the Taliban’s actions of this kind only undermine the international community’s efforts to engage with them, as demonstrated during the Special Envoys’ meeting in Doha two months ago, to realize an Afghanistan at peace with itself and its neighbors, fully reintegrated into the international community and meeting international obligations.

Afghanistan has committed to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and is a party to a number of human rights treaties, particularly the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Afghanistan’s obligations under international law must be fulfilled.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate our full support to the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights in Afghanistan in tackling this issue. The Taliban’s ban on the Special Rapporteur to enter Afghanistan is disturbing, and he should be able to fully carry out his mandate.

Afghan citizens, especially women and girls, have suffered for far too long. Day by day, Afghan women and girls lose their opportunities and hope for their future. This is

unacceptable. We are committed to doing our utmost to holistically address their plight and will continue to monitor the situation closely.

Thank you.