



National Young Women Forum's Position Paper



Our redlines for Life

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Kabul: National Young Women Forum (NYWF) was established almost two years ago under the leadership of Transparent Election Foundation of Afghanistan, and since its very inception, the forum has worked to advocate women's meaningful engagement in Afghanistan's social and political processes. Now that the date for holding the Heart of Asia Summit in Istanbul is drawing closer, women being marginalized, their priorities being neglected, and their accomplishments being undermined are some of the pressing and widely shared concerns associated with the summit.

The National Young Women Forum (NYWF) strongly disbelieves in a peace to be true and enduring without women, it is therefore for the Afghan Government and the International Community to refrain from a summit that overlooks women and their priorities and ideals, and must not subscribe to a peace pact that does not incorporate the will of half of the Afghan population.

In the preceding years, women have suffered tremendously. Nevertheless, growing violence accompanied by target killing of journalists, civic activists, state workers, physicians, and attorneys have intensified Afghan women's determination and commitment for realizing their rights.

Following extensive consultations with its member young women, the Afghanistan's National Young Women Forum (NYWF) identified the following key areas as redlines of Afghanistan's young women, and thereby calls upon the Afghan Government and the International Community to present them in the negotiations as the redlines of not just women but of the whole of the Afghan nation, men and women both:

1. We deem ceasefire and an absolute end to war as two essential preconditions for progress to be made in the peace negotiations, and for a subsequent peace deal to be made.
2. Establishment of a new government based on the will and votes of the public through fair, transparent, and inclusive elections.
3. Ensuring women's basic human rights as equal citizens to men, to include protection of their rights to education, work, elect and be elected, possess, inherit, marry without force, and all other rights essential for leading a life with tranquil. Any peace agreement must therefore clearly specify to uphold all of the aforementioned rights, and efforts should be made to protect these rights from any false interpretations as to how women's rights should be.
4. Afghan women's accomplishments of the past 20 years should be acknowledged, and their protection and expansion should come as an explicit provision of the peace agreement.
5. Women's involvement in leadership of the post-peace-deal government must clearly be mentioned in the peace agreement, stipulating at least 35 percent of the government to be allotted to women.
6. A non-partisan monitoring committee should be established by regional and global partners to oversee the peace agreement's provisions and to ensure they are being abided by.
7. Withdrawal of foreign troops is a wise step only when there is an explicit guarantee for the implementation of the peace agreement's provisions, otherwise conditions will become dreadfully more limited for women than ever.