



Afghanistan Rights Monitor (ARM)
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Afghanistan Rights Monitor (ARM) is a Kabul-based independent entity, established in August 2008 it aims to impartially investigate and report violations of human rights and the overall human rights situation of Afghanistan in order to enhance better understanding of Afghanistan.

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To: Excellency Hamid Karzai
President Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
Gulkhana Palace, Kabul

Sub.: Appeal for Justice

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Dear Mr. President:

Our country is relapsing to failure and the United States is seeking exit. What you and most of us feared could happen, should we miss the post-Taliban opportunities, seems to be coming true. Our malicious neighbors are planning to rip us apart again. Strategists are pondering on a post-NATO/ISAF Afghanistan mired in an endless conflict. Our business and government elites are buying homes in Dubai and more and more parents are sending their children on treacherous routes to Europe and Australia. Outside your Palace and beyond your immediate entourage, the story of our country is of gloom and doom. Our painful history is set to repeat itself and we look weak, fragmented and at a loss.

Please contemplate our immediate past and see how often we failed and why. Foreign leaders and politicians will let us down, as they did repeatedly in the past, because they are bound by their own interests. We know you know our country will not be built by foreigners. They come here time and again and soon pack up and go, leaving us myriad problems to cope with.

Dear Mr. President,

Abdul Ahad Karzai was a good Afghan. For years he served his nation. Evil forces forced him out of his beloved country and brutally assassinated him when he was a refugee on his way from a mosque in Pakistan's Quetta city in 1999. Naheed was a decent Afghan girl. Evil entities tried to rape her in Kabul in 1993, but she jumped out of a 5th floor window and died instantly. Abdul Hadi was a civil engineer. He designed the Sarday Dam in Ghazni Province. Evil forces mercilessly shot him dead in 1981, leaving his widow and three orphans destitute.

I can write millions of painful stories such as these. They have all been engraved in the hearts, minds and feelings of our 28 million compatriots.

Naheed's soul and Abdul Hadi's orphans have been denied justice. Millions like them have not received justice either. Whether or not the sons of Abdul Ahad Karzai pardon his murderers because of their political and financial interests, the millions of victims have seen nothing like a unilateral amnesty for all the alleged wrongdoers. Even Allah (SWT) does not assume the distinct rights of an individual.

Dear Mr. President,

Why are our prospects for peace and prosperity becoming bleak? What makes us less worthy than other nations, which have long put conflict and violence to bed? And, what is constantly distancing us from genuine and viable peace?

I believe the collapse of moral authority has disabled our common sense of goodness and evil. We treat wrong and right as one and the same and do not believe in the distinction between justice and injustice. We have learned to celebrate crime from criminals, but have found little meaning in the power of law and virtue.

We have created a political culture in which power, wealth and legitimacy are acquired only by illicit force and brutality. We have rewarded misdeed and cruelty in order to achieve fake, fragile political stability. As a result 'might' - often illegal - has always been right in our society while 'right' has often been perceived as weak and meaningless.

This culture breathes oxygen into young men who strive to attain their objectives through violence and hatred; as they see others who have gained extensive power and wealth by using the very same tactics. They believe that their course of action will result in places being named after them, in their names being carved in medals and their lives being conducted in palaces. They do not whither for a second to doubt that what they are doing is wrong and unlawful.

Because our people have been repeatedly let down in their aspiration for justice and equality, they now have lost confidence in the very principles and ideals of an enlightened human society. Educated by this brutal social disorder and forced by the basic needs of a human community, our people have been obliged to seek protection and authority from undemocratic and unlawful forces. This is why, in the elections, some people voted for illicit power-holders who have a monopoly over means of violence. This also answers your quandary of how a specific culprit won a million votes in the 2005 presidential elections.

Mr. President,

Afghanistan's greatest wealth is its people. No physical development will sustain her if the hearts and minds of her people remain injurious and occupied by grievances and distrust.

More than roads and large armies, the people of this country need a humane explanation for all the wrongs and mishaps of the past three decades. They have the right to know who murdered their loved ones, destroyed their houses and inflicted numerous other miseries on them. Afghans are relentlessly thirsty for a fundamental answer: where are the mass killers and criminals who killed over a million people and devastated their country?

How long should this crucial question remain ignored and unanswered?

Individuals like Gen. Dostum, Gulbodin Hekmatyar, Mohammad Muhaqiq, Abdulrab Rasoul Sayaf, Ismael Khan, Burhanuddin Rabani, Mullah Omar and Karim Khaleli are perceived as mass murderers, looters and devastators of Afghanistan by a majority of Afghans. Irrefutably, each one of them has a very controversial past and present.

Over eight years of irreversible opportunities for justice have been missed since the collapse of the Taliban's repressive regime.

We cannot sidestep justice because it has inextricable bonds to our societal psyche. It is naïve to continue denying peoples' right to justice and justifying it with political spin and institutional excuses.

Providing unconditional amnesty for appalling crimes and offering free political capital and legitimization to notorious criminals may give you a false sense of victory and an illusive state of stability, but you risk alienating an overwhelming majority of your people.

You cannot achieve peace with hands which are soaked in innocent blood. You cannot rebuild the country with mass murderers and looters. You cannot lift our nation out of violence, poverty and recurrent failures with greedy criminals who breach every law to accumulate wealth and power.

So long as justice is trampled by powerful criminals and warlords, peace will be all but achievable.

Dear Mr. President,

In the current critical moments of our history, more than anything else, there is an urgent need for a genuine social contract between your government and the people of Afghanistan. An honest contract for justice and settlement of all egregious injustices committed over the past three decades.

Afghans have suffered immeasurably at the hands of their own misguided leaders for decades. They are sick of illicit deals and compromises among warring and criminal parties on their common destiny.

Your people are not adverse to any specific group of individuals, frankly your political allies and mentors. They want equal, fair and indiscriminating rights to justice in return for which they would help their war-torn country return to peace.

The burden is upon you to choose between your justice-seeking people and your power-and-wealth -seeking criminal allies.

Sadly, we witness disappointing signs, such as the promulgation of the National Reconciliation, General Amnesty and Stability Law; intensified alliances with notorious warlords; and hasty and largely undemocratic furtive deal-making with insurgent and criminal groups.

If the current negative trend continues, the most likely scenario in the coming two years would resemble the post-soviets Afghanistan of 1990s.

My generation blames the leaders and decision-makers in 1980-1990s for all the appalling calamities we have been through thus far.

The coming generations will hold you responsible for the decisions you make now. It is your last chance to prevail above all upon justice so that we can move towards a peaceful, prosperous future in Afghanistan.

God Bless Afghanistan!