

Immediate Actions for the Biden Administration and World Leaders in the Afghanistan Crisis

With the Taliban once again in control of Afghanistan, the rights and fundamental freedoms of women and girls are at risk, and the lives of women's rights defenders and their families are in grave danger.

The Women's Refugee Commission (WRC) calls on the Biden administration to evacuate all Afghans urgently in need of escape. This includes the thousands of women who put their lives on the line to advance the rights of women and girls across Afghanistan.

- **The United States has a moral responsibility to not abandon Afghan women's rights activists, especially now when their safety is so acutely at stake.**
 - » The Biden administration must **get these women activists and leaders out of the country urgently**. Every hour counts, particularly with the looming threat of the Taliban cutting off communications networks.
 - » They must be **allowed on the planes that are evacuating Americans**—they can't afford to wait for US authorities to just get to them in a few weeks or months.
- The short-term priority is to **use whatever means possible to evacuate these at-risk women leaders and activists.**
 - » **Secure the airport in Kabul** and its surroundings so that it is safe for the women to reach the planes that will lift them out.
 - » **Expedite visas and lower administrative hurdles**—women are fleeing without their passports and there is no time to gather other documentation.
 - » **Provide surge support for US immigration authorities** to get through the backlog of Afghan Special Immigrant Visa (SIV) and priority designation applications.

WRC is also extremely concerned about the humanitarian crisis that is unfolding in Afghanistan. The numbers of internally displaced people in need of urgent humanitarian assistance have skyrocketed in recent weeks—the UN reports that the numbers of internally displaced people in need of humanitarian assistance have already grown to more than 414,000 just since President Biden announced in April to withdraw US troops. There are credible and horrific reports of human rights violations against women and girls, including being forced into marriage or sexual servitude to Taliban soldiers, forbidden from going to work or school, and being raped or flogged in public.

- **The Biden administration and world leaders must:**
 - » **Ensure unfettered humanitarian access** to provide shelter, food, sanitation, protection, and health services.
 - » **Ensure that humanitarian aid programs target the needs of women**, such as support for gender-based violence and reproductive health services.
 - » **Hold the Taliban accountable for violations of international humanitarian law and human rights abuses**, including gender-based violence.

Take action

You can take action. If you are in the US, [contact your Congressional representative and Senator](#) and urge them to call on President Biden to act now to protect at-risk Afghan women's rights defenders and provide humanitarian assistance for those left in the country.